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THE
CRAWFURD PAPERS

A Collection of Official Records relating to
the Mission of Dr. John Crawford sent
to Siam by the Government of
India in the year 1821.

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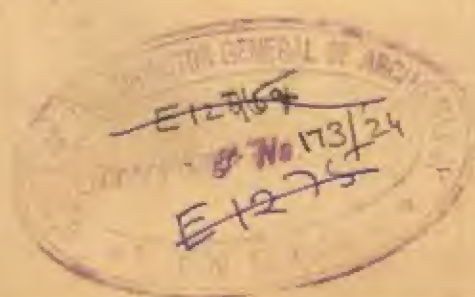
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INTRODUCTION.

IN September 1821, the Governor General of India, the Marquis of Hastings, deputed Doctor John Crawford of the Medical Service on a mission to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China with a view of establishing commercial relations.

Doctor Crawford wrote an account of this mission under the title of :

Journal of an Embassy

from the

Governor General of India
to the

Courts of Siam and Cochin China
exhibiting a view
of the

Actual State of those Kingdoms
by

JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq. ; F.R.S., F.L.S., F.G.S., etc.
late Envoy.

LONDON

HENRY COLBURN, — NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

1828.

The reception the Envoy found in Siam was all he could desire under the circumstances then prevailing. An official intercourse with foreign Powers was perhaps not exactly desired by the Siamese Government. A mission, it is true, had been sent a few years previously from Macao, and the Portuguese Consulate had been established in Bangkok. From the Dutch East Indies a mission had likewise been sent, whilst the United States had sent their merchant ships with a view of establishing trade, and just before Crawford arrived, the newly established Singapore Settlement had sent John Morgan, a merchant, on an unofficial mission which, however, led to no result.

The book which Crawford wrote about his mission gives a very full account of Siam, as it was known to him, at the end of the Reign of Phra Buddha Lōla. It cannot, however, be denied that there are many obvious omissions and reticences in his book, and, as he implies in many places himself, his mission was to a certain extent a failure as he did not succeed in attaining the objects for which the mission was sent.

One of the chief objects of his mission was to induce the Government to reduce the

measurement duty on ships. But in this, he could not succeed as the Government considered a reduction of the duty very inopportune. During the time the discussions were carried on, Crawford went about surveying the country without having previously received permission to do so, and the language said to have been used by him on these occasions and the threats which he was said to have uttered were reported to Government, which was of opinion that Crawford had exceeded in every respect the instructions given to him.

No formal treaty was thus made. The relations, however, greatly improved after Crawford had occupied the position of Governor of Singapore, and a lively correspondence took place between him and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok.

The National Library was allowed to take a copy of all papers in the archives of the India Office having reference to Crawford's Mission, and for that great courtesy the Library desires to express its warm thanks.

These papers are now published for the first time, and they explain the causes of the various misunderstandings which arose between the Government and the Envoy.

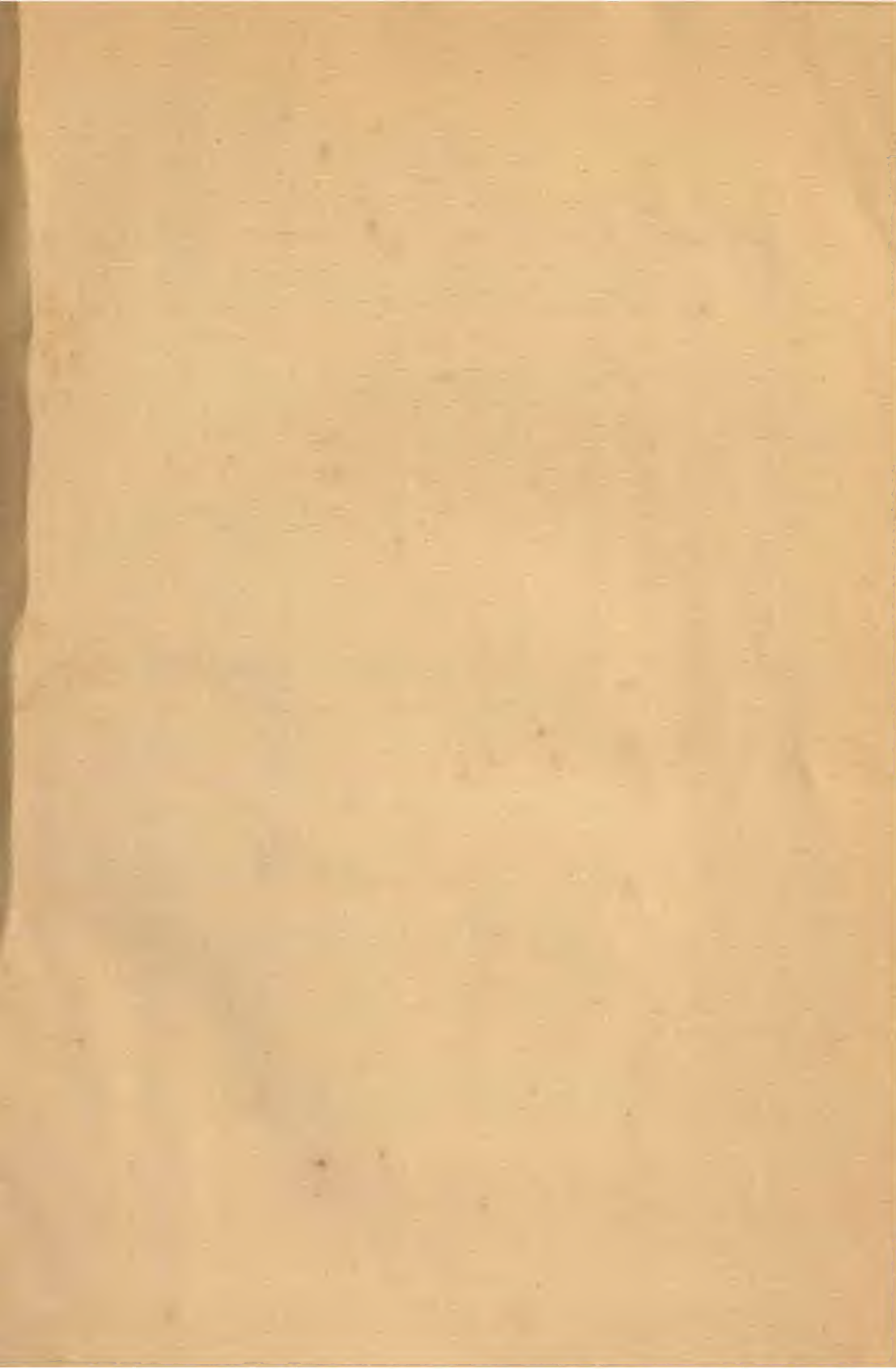
To these Papers are added the Papers with reference to the Storm Episode. The episode itself, though of no political consequence, is certainly not void of interest as it throws light on the customs and manners prevailing at that time.

The thanks of the Library are also due to Miss Anstey, Record Department, India Office, for supervising the copying of the Papers.

Vajirañāṇa National Library,

April, 1915.





CRAWFURD

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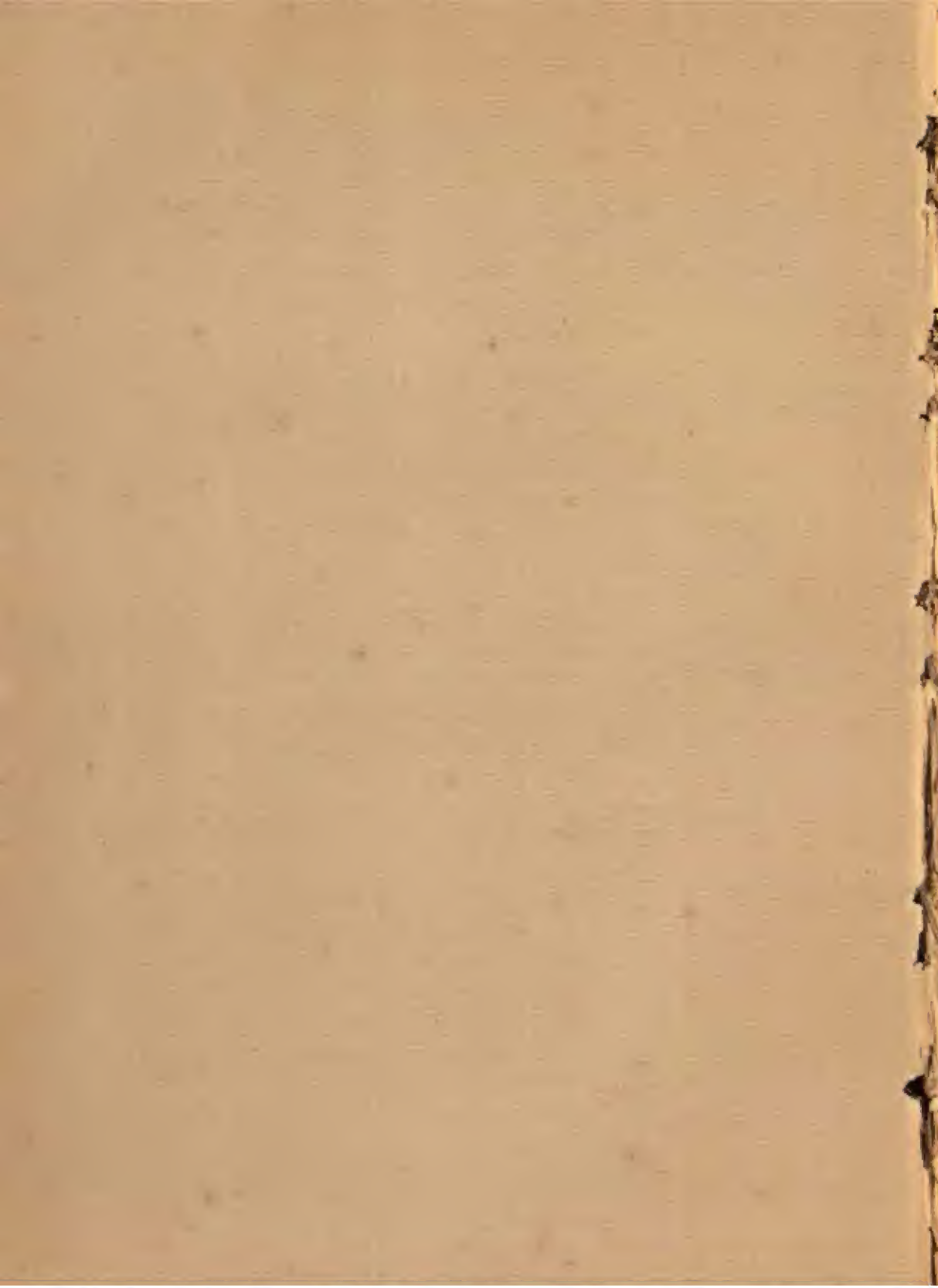
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Political Department.

To the Honorable the Court of Directors for
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pany of Merchants of England trading to
the East Indies.

Honorable Sirs,

We avail ourselves of the earliest opportunity to report to your Honorable Court, our adoption of an experimental measure, which in the present depressed state of commerce both in England and this country appeared to us to be well deserving the trial, and likely in its result to be productive of great national benefit by opening a new and extensive field for British traffic. We allude to a mission to the Kingdoms of Siam and Cochin-China for the purpose of cultivating a friendly connection and negotiating and establishing an improved commercial intercourse with those countries—a measure which we trust will be honoured with the sanction and approbation of your Honorable Court as worthy the greatness and liberality of the Honorable Company and as affording to the nation at large the strongest proof of your cordial disposition to cooperate with alacrity and zeal in forwarding the success of any enterprize in this quarter of the globe which may afford a well grounded hope of relieving the general distress of the manufacturing community at home. The object in truth is the promotion of the welfare and in-

terests of the British Empire at large as well as to extend the commercial relations of your Indian Possessions.

2. Your Honorable Court is fully aware that even in the earlier and ruder period of the commercial intercourse of European nations with India, the trade of Siam and Cochin-China formed an important and valuable branch of it. It could not therefore be matter of doubt that in the improved state of modern navigation and the superior intelligence and active spirit of adventure which characterize the British Merchants of the present day, every facility and encouragement which could be afforded to the revival of a trade with those countries, would be eagerly contributed. As those kingdoms contain a population of at least 30 millions and possess a soil equal in fertility to that of any portion of the globe, the establishment of commercial relations with them would open a vast field for the improved energies alluded to, and would be attended with incomparably more extensive benefit than in former times. Those benefits will be largely partaken by the possessions of the Honorable Company with which a commercial intercourse of considerable and encreasing value and importance cannot fail to result from an opening of the general trade with the countries in question. The Honorable Company has therefore a direct interest in the success of the

measures in our contemplation, without which however solicitous we might be for the improvement of the commercial resources of the Empire at large, we should not have felt ourselves altogether justified in undertaking the mission at the sole expense of the Honorable Company, without the previous authority of your Honorable Court.

3. From the most respectable sources of information we are warranted in stating, that Siam, besides minor commodities, may be expected to afford in such an intercourse, valuable returns of sugar and pepper for Europe and Western Asia, salt for the Indian Islands and teak at a cheap rate, as well as in abundance, for the supply of the British Settlements; while Cochin-China will furnish as staple articles of exportation, raw silk for Europe, and pepper and sugar for both the European and Indian markets. It is known also, that Cochin-China produced to the earlier European traders the largest supply of raw silk of any country in Asia, and should it prove equally abundant in that article at present, the British manufacturer, under any favorable alteration in the impost on raw material, such as we believe is now contemplated by the Legislature, would be enabled successfully to contend with the continental trade, and our silk manufactures would be placed in point of extent and prosperity on a scale with our cotton.

4. With respect to the export of British manufactures to Siam and Cochin-China, if we may judge from the success with which they have recently been introduced into Hindoostan, the Indian Islands, and even China, there is every probability that the demand will be considerable. The inhabitants of those regions of Asia are not understood to be, themselves, a manufacturing people in the most limited acceptation of the term, and they have in all times gladly received the imperfect and high priced fabrics of Hindostan and China.

5. If we succeed in removing the groundless fears and jealousies hitherto believed to be entertained by the Siamese and Cochin Chinese Governments with regard to an intercourse with Europeans, and in establishing a general freedom of traffic, an extensive demand may be expected for woollens, cotton goods, raw and wrought iron, Bengal opium and various other articles of minor note. The trade with Siam is chiefly conducted at present by the Chinese settled in that country, who bring its produce to the European ports in the Straits of Malacca, and receive European and Indian goods in return; while Chinese junks and a few colonial Portuguese ships from Macao conduct the traffic between the territories of the King of Cochin-China and China; but by laying the trade with those countries directly open to the activity of Euro-

pean enterprize, an extension of commerce would follow which it would be vain to expect from the feeble, unskilful and indirect efforts of native speculation. Under all the imperfections of the existing system of intercourse with Siam, a trade of no inconsiderable amount is carried on between that country and the settlement of Prince of Wales's Island and your Honorable Court will have perceived in the correspondence of the Government of that Presidency an anxious solicitude and an apparently well grounded hope for an extension of that commerce through the means of more intimate relations between the two Governments.

6. We do not anticipate any obstacles of a serious nature to the opening a general trade with Siam. American and British country ships have within the last five years visited it, in considerable numbers. The principal object which, we conceive, the deputation of a friendly mission from this Government might effect, was to place the intercourse on a defined and permanent footing, so as to expose the British traders to the least possible vexation and to hold out to the Sovereign of the country the prospect of obtaining such an increase of Revenue as would make it his interest to afford his protection to the foreign merchant. This, it appeared to us, would be best effected by establishing some summary mode of

levying the import duty as is practised by the Chinese, by which the impost becomes comparatively light, while the inquisition of the native officer into the particulars of the cargoes imported and all the chicanery to which it is liable are entirely avoided.

* * * *

[Paras. 7 to 9 refer to Cochin-China.]

10. It appeared to us, after a mature consideration of the subject, that a Mission from the Governor General, as the supreme British authority in India, to the Kings of Siam and Cochin-China, would, if conducted with moderation, afford a fair promise of success in realizing the important objects which we had in view as above detailed. We were decidedly of opinion, that the most prudent and politic course would be to confine the object of the proposed mission to the revival merely of a commercial intercourse on an improved basis by more accurately defining the principles on which the trade should be conducted, and by avoiding all negotiation for any territorial cession. Any attempt to establish a factory on a permanent footing in the country, we were satisfied would only tend to rouse the jealousy of those States, and thus to defeat the very object we were anxious to obtain.

11. In the selection of the Agent to whom we determined to confide the charge of

this Mission, we confidently anticipate the approbation of your Honorable Court. The former employment of Dr. Crawford, of your Bengal Medical Establishment, in a diplomatic capacity in Java, his intimate acquaintance with the manners, customs and commerce of the various nations of the Eastern Archipelago, and the high reputation for ability, judgment and discretion, which he had so deservedly acquired, pointed him out to us as a person eminently qualified for the successful conduct of this delicate and important duty. We understood indeed, that he had directed his particular attention to the trade with Siam and Cochin-China, and he was thus prepared for the task by the full and accurate knowledge he had previously acquired with regard to every thing connected with the former and present political and commercial history of those countries.

12. We will not trespass on the time of your Honorable Court with a detail of the instructions we have furnished Mr. Crawford for his guidance, founded on the principles to which we have already adverted in a preceding paragraph. We conceive it will be more satisfactory to your Honorable Court, to peruse the letter of instructions itself, which comprizes every object to which we deemed it of importance to direct Mr. Crawford's attention, including the eventual negotiation of some points that had recently occupied the deliberations of

the Government of Penang, and been the subject of correspondence between that Government and ourselves.

13. It will be necessary however briefly to advert to the scale on which we have deemed it proper to equip the Mission, and we indulge a confident persuasion that your Honorable Court will be satisfied, that while we have paid every proper regard for the character of the Government which our Agent is deputed to represent, we have duly attended to the necessity of exhibiting an imposing appearance among a people who attach so much importance to external pomp and show, the utmost practicable care has been observed to confine the expense of the Mission within the most moderate limits, compatible with the successful execution of the objects in view. On a comparison indeed with the outfit of former missions to the Eastward, such as those to Ava for example, it will appear that the scale of allowances and establishments has been considerably reduced, while in point of efficiency the present Mission cannot be considered in any respect inferior.

14. Besides the Agent, we have appointed an assistant who is a practised and skilful surveyor, and to whom we have given provisional authority to perform the functions of Envoy in the event of the possible indispo-

sition or demise of Mr. Crawford, and in the nomination of a medical officer, we have selected a gentleman, who by previous habits and study is well qualified to perform the duties of a naturalist.

15. With respect to the latter duty we conceived that such a favorable opportunity of prosecuting scientific research in countries so deeply interesting and so imperfectly known, ought not to be lost, and we did not hesitate to make the appointment in the confident hope, that your Honorable Court would not disapprove of our seizing an occasion to extend the bounds of science and natural history which must redound to the honor and reputation of your Indian Government.

16. The operations of a Surveyor, we were aware, could not be conducted with the same freedom and satisfaction as those of the naturalist; but it is to be hoped that in the progress of the Mission some favorable opportunities will offer, and it would have been matter of regret if no scientific gentleman had been present to avail himself of them. We rely with confidence on the discretion of the Envoy for avoiding any occasion of offence or jealousy to the Sovereign or people of the countries to which he is to proceed, which might be created by an incautious attempt to undertake survey operations.

17. We have fixed a personal allowance of 1,500 rupees for Doctor Crawford, and have assigned a civil allowance of 600 rupees for Captain Dangerfield, the assistant and surveyor, and 680 rupees for Dr. Finlayson, being the scale of allowance usually granted to an Assistant surveyor attached to a Residency. The former gentleman is an officer on the Military Establishment of the Presidency of Bombay, and the latter belongs to His Majesty's 8th Regiment of Dragoons. With regard to both of these gentlemen we have deemed it equitable to permit them to hold their civil allowances without being subjected to any retrenchment from their military pay and allowances.

18. We have also attached an escort of thirty Mussulmaun Sepoys under the command of an Ensign, and we have authorized Mr. Crawford to entertain a moderate establishment of writers and interpreters which it is calculated will not exceed a monthly expense of 350 rupees. We have also permitted Mr. Finlayson to employ a young lad from the General Hospital at a small salary of 40 rupees per mensem to assist him in dissections and other operations connected with his pursuits as naturalist, and to entertain a carpenter and a few labourers for the same purposes.

19. A suitable vessel, completely equipped in every respect, has been taken up for the

accommodation of the Mission at a monthly expense of 4,000 Rupees, and we have authorized Doctor Crawford to draw a consolidated monthly allowance of 2,000 Rupees per mensem on account of State servants and equipage, table expenses and every other charge attending the Mission, an arrangement which we consider as much more eligible and involving much less actual cost to Government than the plan of allowing the Envoy to charge his expenses, as practised on former occasions.

20. We have furnished Mr. Crawford with letters to the Kings of Siam and Cochin-China and authorized the preparation of suitable presents, exclusive of fire arms, to an extent of about 19,000 Rupees. With respect to the fire arms, we understood that a present of muskets would be peculiarly acceptable to the Kings of Siam and Cochin-China, and we accordingly directed 850 stand of arms to be furnished from the arsenal for that purpose.

21. We have also sanctioned the purchase of a transit instrument and a chronometer for the use of the surveyor while employed on the Mission, and of a microscope and a few trifling articles for the use of the naturalist.

22. For the more ready reference of your Honorable Court, we have the honor to

transmit as numbers in the Packet, the principal documents connected with the Mission, comprising copies of our instructions to the Agent, the letters to the Kings of Siam and Cochin-China, the credentials to Mr. Crawford and Captain Dangerfield, our letters to the Government of Prince of Wales's Island and the Resident of Singapore, and a list of the articles purchased for presents.

23. The Mission left the river on the 21st instant, and proceeds in the first instance to Penang.

We have the honor to remain, with the greatest respect,

Honorable Sirs,

Your most faithful,

Humble Servants,

HASTINGS

J. ADAM

JOHN FENDALL.

Fort William

23d November 1821.

P.S.—Since the above letter was written, we have received a dispatch from the Resident at Singapore, a copy of which we have the honor to enclose, as exhibiting a favorable disposition on the part of the King of Siam to encourage an intercourse with our Government.

Bengal Letters
Received, vol. 87.

To The Honorable the Court of Directors for
Affairs of the Honorable the United Com-
pany of Merchants of England Trading to
the East Indies.

Honorable Sirs,

We deem it our duty to transmit to your Honorable Court copies of a correspondence with the Government of Prince of Wales Island relative to the invasion of the kingdom of Kedah by a Siamese force under the Rajah of Ligore, and to the measures adopted by the Honorable the Governor in Council of that Island in consequence of the Siamese having made an incursion into the British territory on the Coast, and even threatening Penang itself.

2. In our instructions to the Agent deputed on a Mission to Siam which formed an enclosure in our address to your Honorable Court of the 23rd November last,* your Honorable Court will have observed that we had directed the attention of Mr. Crawford to the correspondence which passed between this Government and that of Prince of Wales's Island, relative to the disputes that existed between Siam and its tributary States, and which, in the instance of Kedah, have now led to the invasion and subjugation of that country by the Siamese arms.

*See preceding letter
from vol. 86.

3. The deputation of a British Mission to Siam at the present time may be considered as extremely opportune, and we are indeed inclined to believe that its actual arrival at Prince of Wales's Island in prosecution of its voyage to that capital, at the critical period of the Rajah of Ligore's attack on Kedah, will have a very powerful influence on the proceedings of that Chief in the country in question.

4. From the documents transmitted by the Government of Penang in their dispatch of the 31st December last,* Your Honorable Court will observe that Mr. Crawford has been furnished with all the information necessary to enable him to avail himself of any favorable opportunity of effecting the restoration of the Rajah of Kedah, an object to which, with advertence to the various inconveniences to be apprehended from our being brought into immediate contact with a Siamese authority in Kedah, the government of Prince of Wales's Island attach the greatest importance.

*See *Straits Settlements*, vol. 81.

5. We trust the tenor of our instructions to the Government of Prince of Wales's Island, founded on our conviction of the soundness of the views taken by that Government of the expediency of maintaining, if practicable, the interposition of a friendly Malay state between us and the haughty and barbarous Government

of Siam, will be approved by your Honorable Court. In the present friendly disposition of the King of Siam, which cannot fail to be improved and confirmed by the Mission now proceeding to the Court with valuable presents, and more especially the seasonable supply of fire arms, we anticipate no difficulties in the conclusion of a satisfactory adjustment of the differences between His Majesty and the Rajah of Kedah through our mediation, without the hazard of our being involved in any embarrassing participation in the interests and concerns of the latter State. The utmost extent to which we can be pledged for the State of Kedah, is the punctual transmission by that Chief of the customary tokens of vassalage, or a small pecuniary tribute in commutation of them, and we possess the means of securing the fulfilment of such an engagement by holding in our hands the annual quit-rent paid to Kedah on account of Penang.

6. With regard to the various important topics connected with the extension of our political relations to the Eastward, to which the Honorable the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island has adverted in his Minute accompanying the dispatch of the 31st ultimo, we propose to state in reply that the general question of our policy to the Eastward having been fully submitted in a letter from the Government of Penang to your Honorable

* Copied from
Straits Settlements
vol. 182.

Court, under date the 17th October 1818,* all negotiations with the Native Chiefs in that quarter for cessions of territory or the formation of new Establishments on the Malay Coast, such as those enumerated by Mr. Phillips, would in our opinion be expediently suspended, until the receipt of your Honorable Court's orders in reply to the dispatch above mentioned.

7. Before we conclude this dispatch, we beg leave to solicit the attention of your Honorable Court to the satisfactory information stated in the 29th and 30th paragraphs of Mr. Phillips's Minute, relative to the friendly disposition of the Court of Siam as manifested towards the private Agent deputed to that Capital in the beginning of last year, when it appeared he met with a very cordial reception at Bangkok, and that the Ministers there seemed anxious to cultivate a more intimate intercourse with the British Government. Your Honorable Court will observe that the commerce of that place is said to be on a very extensive scale; that the American trade is increasing rapidly, and that the Government of the United States had lately opened a communication with Siam and contemplated fixing a Consul there in the course of the present year. By the statements annexed to Mr. Phillips's Minute, of the trade that is conducted between Siam and Prince of

Wales's Island, your Honorable Court will also observe that the imports and exports amounted for the last official year to 4 Lacks of Rupees, and that on the articles of British woollen, cotton and cutlery, the exports might be beneficially extended, while the importation perhaps of grain, as well as sugars, gold dust and the various useful and dyeing woods fit for the Europe market, might be much encreased.

8. Having within these few days received a report from Mr. Crawford of his arrival at Prince of Wales's Island, and of the satisfactory communication which had been made to him by the Rajah of Ligore, we have the honor to transmit a copy of it for the information of your Honorable Court.

We have, &c.

HASTINGS,

JAS. STUART,

"

JOHN FENDALL.

Fort William

26th January 1822.

[Endorsed]

26 January 1822

Fort William

Poll. Dept.

Letter from His Excellency the Governor General in Council dated the 26th January 1822.

(8 enclosures)

No. 1

Read in Court

24 July 1822.

Recd.

Per Fairlie

23d July 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th Jany. 1823.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

No. 20.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

* *not traced.*

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st of January * directing enquiry to be made respecting certain Swedish Iron shipped on board the John Adam at Calcutta, for which the owners claimed a drawback from the Government. I have the honor to state for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General that every circumstance connected with the iron in question, from its shipment at Calcutta until its being landed at Singapore, were utterly unknown to me. Having made application to the Commander of the Ship for such explanation as it was in his power to give I now beg leave to submit his answer, with the letter which I addressed to him.

I have &c.

(Sd.) J. CRAWFURD,
Agent to the Governor
General.

Bang Kok
28th June 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th Jany. 1823.

No. 21. To Captain MACDONNELL
Commanding the Honorable Company's
Hired Ship John Adam.

Sir,

I have been requested by the Agent to the Governor General to transmit to you copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Government respecting a certain quantity of Swedish iron, shipped on board the John Adam as ballast, and request you will supply such information respecting the iron in question as you may be in possession of.

The Agent to the Governor General requests me to call your particular attention to the 18th paragraph of the Charter Party, and to the letters addressed to you on the 28th, 29th and 30th* April.

* not copied.

I have &ca.

(Sd). T. DANGERFIELD,
Captain—Assistant.

Bang Kok
28th June 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th Jany. 1823.

To Capt. DANGERFIELD

No. 22.

&ca. &ca. &ca.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date with its enclosure, in reply to which I beg leave to state that the iron alluded to was shipped on board as ballast as kentledge could not be procured at Calcutta. From the information that I received at Singapore relative to the shallowness of the bar at Siam, I was induced to land the iron at that port, and supply its place with stone ballast, judging that I should be obliged to lighten the ship considerably before I could succeed in crossing the bar, which has been the case, and stones were much better than bars of iron for the purpose, being cheaper and more easily thrown overboard.

I have &ca.

(Sd.) THOS. McDONNELL.

Ship John Adam
Bangkok 28th June 1822.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, p. 200.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 28 Nov., 1822.

AGENT to the
GOVERNOR GENERAL at SIAM.

Agent to the
Governor General
at Siam.

TO W. A. CLUBLEY Esquire.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

I have the honor herewith to transmit for the information of the Honorable the Governor and Council copy of a dispatch which I have addressed to His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General on the subject of my instructions, which more particularly regards the interest of Prince of Wales Island. On my arrival at Penang I shall have the honor of laying before the Honble. the Governor and Council every description of information connected with the other objects of my Mission.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD
A. G. G.

Bang Kok
July 1822.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements.

vol. 87,
pp. 201-236.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 28 Nov., 1822.

(Copy)

Enclosure.

To GEORGE SWINTON Esquire
Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

The negotiations with the Court of Siam having terminated, I proceed to lay before the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, a detail of my proceedings as far as the immediate relations of the Government of Prince of Wales Island, with the Kingdom of Siam and with its tributary states are concerned, this being the matter arising out of my instructions, which most urgently calls for an early communication.

It is necessary that I should begin by premising that the British Mission to Siam has had to negotiate with a people of great singularity of character whose principles of action will not easily be appreciated from what the British power in India has experienced in the history of its connexion with other Asiatic Nations. The character of the Government of Siam was discovered in the very earliest periods of our intercourse with it to be unusually sordid, insincere and rapacious, and our more mature experience shewed us that one of the finest and most favored Countries

of the world was oppressed by one of the most mischievous forms of Government. To a character of venality and corruption, we found superadded a remarkable degree of national vanity yet with an extraordinary jealousy and distrust of all strangers, and especially of Europeans. We saw indeed that an intercourse with the latter was courted, but merely as affording an object of extortion to those in power, for whether with regard to foreigners or to the people, a more reckless undisguised disregard for equity and the public interests cannot well be conceived.

With a Government thus at once vain, jealous, insincere and corrupt it was no easy matter with a due regard to the national honor to conduct a negociation at all, and to bring it to precise and satisfactory results, as might have been looked for with a people of a less barbarous and more manly character, was found in the sequel impracticable.

I had my first conference with the officers of the Siamese Court on the subject of the Quedah question on the 21st of May, having delayed introducing it until this late period in obedience to my instructions, which directed that this subject might not be mixed with that, which was the primary object of the Mission. The principal Siamese negociator was the Prah Klang, or minister who is at once charged

with the affairs of strangers and with commercial affairs which are supposed to have an immediate relation to each other. This chief whose name is Suriwung Kosa, is a man of considerable parts, but of very little sincerity, and extremely rapacious, other persons of inferior rank were joined with him. The Siamese negotiators communicated with me at this conference on the subject of the invasion of Queda, and the flight of the King to Prince of Wales Island, with a good deal more frankness than I had reason to expect. I opened the subject by admitting at once the dependence of Queda on Siam stating that this point had been fully enquired into by the Most Noble the Governor General of India, and been conceded without hesitation. With respect to the Rajah of Quedah personally, however, I observed that he was an old friend of the English Nation, and that compassion for his misfortunes had induced us to afford him an asylum. We had not, I continued, enquired into the merits or demerits of his conduct but according to our custom had afforded protection to an unfortunate Prince, and a friend who had come amongst us. I added that the King of Queda or any other Prince in the same situation was at all times at perfect liberty to go where he pleased but we considered it a point of honor not to surrender him under any circumstances whatever. The sentiments expressed with considerable warmth, and directly through

my own interpreters, seemed to give no umbrage. On the contrary, the Prah Klang observed, although I believe with little sincerity, that the principle adopted by the British Government was a liberal and generous one, and could not but be approved of.

The Siamese negociators now stated that all [that] was known at the Court on the subject of the invasion of Queda was, that a quarrel took place between the Governor of Ligor and the King of Queda, and that the latter, abandoning his Kingdom, had fled for refuge to Penang, a foreign Country. One side of the question, they said only had been heard, and not much of that. The Governor of Ligor had sent three or four letters to the Court, charging the King of Queda with being refractory and disobedient, but the latter had not said one word in his own justification. The affair, they said, was still in a state of abeyance, and the Ministers had not as yet even laid it in a formal manner before the King. I begged to know what the offences were with which the Rajah of Queda was charged by the Governor of Ligor. The negociators replied that the latter was directed to invade the Burman territories, had prepared an Army for that purpose, and having made the customary demands upon the King [of] Queda for provisions and other supplies, the latter, in defiance of his allegiance, had refused to furnish them. Upon this act of dis-

obedience the Governor of Ligor marched down to Queda to enforce his demand. At this place a quarrel ensued between the Siamese and Malays, some blood was shed, and the Rajah of Queda suddenly took to flight and concealed himself in Penang. After hearing this statement I informed the negociators that the whole of the correspondence and papers as far as our Government was concerned were in my possession, and that I was therefore able to afford them a satisfactory elucidation of several of the points to which they had now alluded. I noticed that Queda was a poor and inconsiderable country, and could not bear the frequent exactions of the Governor of Ligor, who was in the practice of making many demands, which could not be authorized by his sovereign, the King of Siam, and that by these means, he constantly harassed the people and Prince of Queda, who had no means of redress. I added that the Rajah of Queda, though dutifully obedient to his liege the King of Siam, could not but consider the Governor of Ligor as his personal enemy. The Prah-Klang observed that both the Prince Kromchiat (the King's eldest son and head of the foreign and Commercial departments) and he himself were particularly well-disposed to favor the cause of the King of Queda, and that if he would repair to the capital, and submit his cause to the justice of the Siamese Court, he should have no reason

to complain. The negociators now pointedly complained that the King of Queda had made Penang the place of his retreat, instead of coming directly to the capital and making his complaint to the King in person. I answered that this resource was totally out of his power, for that his own life was in immediate danger and in a moment of emergency he had therefore sought safety where he could most easily find it. The negociators observed, that the King of Queda had run away without telling why he had done so, or affording any explanation whatever of his conduct. I replied that there was no time for explanation or remonstrance, for that the Raja of Ligor had commenced by killing two of his principal officers and by putting others in chains, and as to the Rajah himself he had threatened his life, proceeded to depose him of his hereditary title and the dignity conferred upon him by the Court of Siam, without waiting for the sanction of his Sovereign. The negociators requested to know what I meant by the Governor of Ligor's having threatened the life of the King of Queda. I informed them that the Governor of Ligor in one of his letters to the Governor of Prince of Wales Island had demanded the person of the King of Queda, dead or alive, and used in that document threatening and unbecoming language. I observed that the British Government had, with much forbearance, passed this over, but dwelt much upon the injury which

might be done to the friendship between the two Nations if a subordinate officer of the Siamese Government were permitted upon his own authority to pursue a conduct so intemperate as that of which I complained.

I now stated that as our territory and settlement of Prince of Wales Island were in the immediate vicinity of the Queda State, we could not be indifferent to what was passing there, for when that principality was in a state of anarchy and confusion as on the present occasion, in consequence of the Siamese invasion, our territories necessarily suffered severely from an interruption of industry and regular communication which deprived us of the habitual supplies for which we depended upon the territory of Queda. I said therefore, that upon this account, as well as the King's being an old friend, we should be happy to see him restored, considering this as the surest means of giving tranquillity to the Country. I here suggested, that in the event of the Malay Prince being restored, the fairest means of preventing all future altercation between the Chief of Ligor and the Malay Prince, would be that the Siamese Government should afford the latter an exact specification of its annual demands upon the state of Queda, and that the British Government, if any doubt were entertained of the punctuality of the Malay Prince, should engage to make good the stipulated

contingent to a day. As a practical proof of the sincerity of this proposal, I made an offer of paying down immediately upon my own authority, any arrears that might be due by the Rajah of Quedah, if it were thought proper to restore him to his throne without further investigation. No reply whatever was made to this important proposition. Considering indeed the pride of the Siamese Court, and the prosperous condition of its affairs at present, I have great doubts whether any proposals of ours however moderate or equitable which may appear to encroach upon its rights of sovereignty, or to fetter the exercise of a despotic and unlimited power over its tributary states will be listened to, under any circumstances.

In answer to that part of the Siamese negociators' charge, that the King of Queda had offered no defence, I told them that I was in possession of a letter from that Prince to one of the Siamese Ministers begging the interposition of His Majesty the King of Siam in his behalf, and asking forgiveness for any offence which through inadvertency he may have committed. This letter, after some hesitation they agreed to receive, and it was transmitted after my return from the conference.

On the 25 May the conferences respecting the Queda affair were renewed. The Minister

Suri-wung Kosa began by informing me, that in consequence of what I had stated at our last interview, the Rajah of Ligor had been ordered to Court to render an account of his proceedings in the affair of Queda. He added however that he had but yesterday received a letter from that chief in which [it] was stated that the country of Queda was everywhere in a state of tranquillity, and that an amicable intercourse subsisted between himself and the Government of Penang. He offered to send me a Copy of this document if I wished for it, and did so a few days thereafter. A translation of it is appended to this dispatch.* The minister remarked that the Rajah of Ligor and the Rajah [of] Queda were both equally Slaves to the King of Siam, and that if a dispute arose between them, they were bound to repair to the capital, and there have their respective pretensions examined. He added the following expression, "the King of Queda "is not a Child, he knows the customs of "the Country, and if he wishes to be restored to "his Kingdom he will repair to the presence." To this I replied, that if the King of Queda thought proper to come to the Court the British Government would not only not interrupt him, but even assist him in the journey; but that, if, on the other hand he did not think proper to come of his own accord no power should certainly remove him from Prince of Wales Island. The negociators then asked whether

* See *infra*.

if a letter were written to the Governor General of India requesting him to send the King of Queda up to Siam willing or unwilling it would be complied with. I answered that it most certainly would not, and I further recommended that such a letter should not be written, because the Governor General might justly construe it into a reflection upon his known honor and humanity.

I now begged leave to express it as my own opinion, that it was not very likely the King of Queda would come up to Siam, because being a different religion and different nation from those in authority, it was highly probable he would feel apprehensive of the influence of the Governor of Ligor at the Capital, this officer being of higher rank than himself, a Siamese by birth, and related to persons of the highest rank about the Court. Of this Chief's forbearance, I remarked, that the King of Queda, from what had already transpired, could have nothing to hope. In relation to this point I now produced an extract of the original Malay letter of the Governor of Ligor, in which that chief had required the person of the Rajah of Queda dead or alive, from the Governor of Penang, and threatened this island with invasion if this demand were not complied with. A written translation of this paper had been made into Siamese from the Malay in which it was originally written, and was now explained

passage by passage to the Siamese negotiators. Whether they had before seen it or not I do not know, but they now seemed surprized at the intemperance of the language made use [of], and demanded to know if I had the original letter in my possession. I explained that I had not, as it was not customary to remove such documents from the records of Government, but that I had an authenticated copy in my possession which I should be ready to produce if it were required. I thought it necessary to remark with regard to the intemperate language of the Rajah of Ligor, that the British authority in India was not accustomed to receive such letters, but that the Governor General of India and the Governor of Penang had been pleased to overlook this indiscretion on the part of the Chief of Ligor in their great desire for the friendship of His Majesty the King of Siam, and firmly believing that the offensive letter was the sole and unauthorized act of the Governor of Ligor himself. The Siamese Chiefs seemed evidently anxious to find some apology for the intemperate language made use of by the Governor of Ligor, and would have me to think that as far as we were concerned at least that the words made use of might be explained by the wide difference which exists between our manners and customs. I found myself obliged to interrupt this explanation by informing them in a more decided tone than I had yet taken, that no difference

of language or manners could authorize the holding out of an unequivocal threat in whatever terms conveyed.

As the great object imposed upon me, in the instructions I received from the Government of Penang, was the removal of the Chief of Ligor and the Siamese from Queda, and the restoration of the Malay Government, I now again dwelt at considerable length upon the risk and inconvenience which must be incurred by the Siamese Chiefs continuing to occupy the territory of Queda. With this view I brought to the notice of the negociators, the circumstances connected with the invasion of Prye, the flight of 4 or 5,000 of the native inhabitants of Queda to Prince of Wales Island, the proof which this afforded of the anarchy which existed, and of the inconvenience which resulted to our Settlement from so great and sudden an accession of new and needy inhabitants. When this last circumstance was mentioned, the Chiefs asked me if the Rajah of Queda had any jurisdiction over the persons of those who took refuge along with him in Penang, and whether he could punish any of them on his own authority. To this I answered that he had not the slightest authority whatever in Penang, but that every one residing within this or any other portion of the British dominions, strangers as well as natives, were under the pro-

tection of known and fixed laws and could not arbitrarily be interfered with by any individual, however high his rank. The Minister Suriwong-Kosa observed "this state of things must be highly inconvenient to the King of Queda." This had evident reference to certain communications made to the Court in the letter of the Rajah of Ligor already alluded to.

I ventured now to suggest to the negotiators, that as there were many obstacles to an examination of the question at issue between the Rajah of Ligor and the King of Kedah at Siam, an officer of superior rank to either party might be deputed to the spot to examine into the affair, a proceeding by which a transaction, which was involved at present in many difficulties might be brought to a prompt and easy decision. Suriwong-Kosa either misunderstood, or feigned to misunderstand the nature of the proposition, and pointedly asked me whether if two tributaries of the British Government were to quarrel, and one of the parties were to fly to a foreign power for protection, we should depute a commissioner into the territory of such foreign power to investigate the transaction. I explained that this was not the proposal I had offered to their consideration, that I had stated the Commissioner should proceed not to Prince of Wales Island, but to Queda, which was in the Siamese territories, and that therefore the two cases were

not parallel. The minister replied that this was not the custom of the Siamese, and that the King always wished "to look into such matters with his own eyes." I observed upon this, that notwithstanding His Majesty's high character, this mode of proceeding might be found inadequate to the ends of justice and even of good policy as the evidences were all at a distance, as the King of Queda would most probably not appear, and as at all events a great deal of valuable time would be wasted. His answer to this was little more than a repetition of what he had said already, shewing the determination which existed, if possible, to have the Malay Prince brought up, at all risks, to the capital. "The Rajah of Queda is not a child, he knows the customs of the country, and if he wishes to be restored, he must come into the presence, and submit his cause to the King." He enforced this observation by adding: "If he will but comply with the wishes of the Court in coming up, the Prince Krom-Chiat and myself who are well disposed towards him, will be answerable for his personal safety." From confidential information which I had previously received, I was fully aware that it was the party of these very individuals that had recommended the invasion of Queda and the seizure of the King's person, and this for an accusation of treason for alleged assistance given to the national enemy—the Burmans.

I had no hesitation therefore in answering, that I could accept of no pledge whatever for the King of Queda, as his business as far as related to Siam was not an affair in which we would interfere, but with our advice, and the King of Queda must therefore be guided solely by the dictates of his own judgment. The use made upon this occasion of the letter transmitted by the King of Queda at the suggestion of the Supreme Government was extremely illiberal. The minister observed to me in reference to it that the Rajah of Queda had actually acknowledged his own offence in the letter which had been forwarded through me, and therefore why did he not come up at once and receive his pardon? I said, I was not aware that the Rajah of Queda had acknowledged any offence, and believed that the expression he had made use of towards his superior was but a complimentary one, which simply expressed that if he were in fault he entreated forgiveness.

Referring to the inconveniences which might result from delay, and with a hope of enforcing my argument in favor of the restoration of the Malay Prince, I here brought to the notice of the Siamese negotiators, that the Governor of Ligor since writing the offensive letter of which I had complained, had addressed others to the Governor of Prince of Wales Island in a similar tone, and I repeated that

the public tranquillity might be endangered if such a licence on the part of this officer were persevered in. In answer to this the minister said that express orders should be sent to the Chief of Ligor and all other Siamese Officers to preserve the most guarded conduct with the British authorities, in their future intercourse with them. I here once more protested against any unforeseen accident which might result from the personal conduct of the Chief of Ligor, if we were compelled upon our part to take any decided steps in vindication of our honor or character.

I judged the present a proper occasion to come to an unequivocal explanation respecting the payment of the annual stipend of 10,000 Dollars to the King of Queda, hoping that a knowledge of our determination upon this point might be an additional argument to induce the Siamese to withdraw from Queda. I brought it at once therefore to the knowledge of the Siamese negociators, that the stipend in question was a donation of the British Government to the Rajah and his late father, and that being a payment exclusively to his family, it would be appropriated for his support as long as he remained under our protection, and regularly paid as before on his restoration. I had anticipated the probability that the mooted question of this point would bring on the question of our right of sovereignty in Prince of Wales Island, and a

demand upon the part of the Siamese for the payment of the annual stipend, but neither question was agitated. The Siamese negotiators, by their silence at least, seemed to acquiesce in our right of appropriating the stipend, and the frequent and distinct references made to Prince of Wales Island throughout the conferences as a British possession, left no doubt whatever upon my mind, that the Siamese looked upon our right of Sovereignty in Penang and the territory opposite to it, as one not to be questioned. The right of the Malay Prince to alienate a portion of his fief, being once admitted by the Siamese Court, and a total silence of 36 years, must be looked upon as a valid and substantial admission of it, the payment of the stipend which depended upon this alienation could not with any shew of justice be claimed by the paramount after conquering the vassal state. I am fully convinced, however, that it is not upon any abstract principle of this nature, that the Siamese are restrained from questioning our right of sovereignty in Prince of Wales Island, or demanding the stipend which depends upon our occupying it, but from a real and practical fear of agitating a point which they are very well aware, they have not the power to maintain.

Here the conference ended, and considering the character of the Government, and the

evident resolution they had formed on the Queda question, I judged it prudent and strictly conformable to my instructions to abstain from urging the subject to greater length lest I might run the risk of involving our Government by a further agitation of it. The only points which have been gained, but they are of some value, are the virtual establishment of our right of sovereignty in Prince of Wales Island and its territory on the Peninsula, our acquittal from the payment of the annual stipend to the Siamese—the probability that the impression made upon the minds of the Siamese Court will exact from the Governor of Ligor a more moderate and respectful demeanor with the British authorities in his future intercourse with them, but above all, an insight into the real character of the Siamese Court and its resources. All the points of inferior importance referred to in the Minute of the Honble. the Governor of Prince of Wales Island, furnished to me in the course of my communications while at that Settlement, it was soon found it would be impolitic to agitate. For this reason the subject of free and unrestricted trade with the Siamese and Malay Ports and rivers on the west side of the Peninsula was abandoned as impracticable. An insuperable repugnance indeed was shewn throughout, on the part of the Siamese Court, to enter into any written engagements whatever. Their jealousy, it must be observed, is particularly

directed to the subject of trade. Almost every considerable article of the produce of the country suited to a foreign market, is in one shape or another, made a subject of monopoly by the Crown, and therefore every attempt of strangers to obtain a free trade, or to limit the licence of arbitrary exaction on the part of the Sovereign, is viewed by the Court with the utmost jealousy and considered as an infringement of the King's prerogative, or an encroachment upon the perquisites of his officers.

To have agitated the question of territorial cession, if it had not been prohibited in the last instructions of the Supreme Government, would have been found still more impolitic.

In the possible event of the Siamese becoming our immediate neighbours by annexing Queda to the empire, and destroying the established form of its Government, that country is necessarily placed under new regulations with regard to our Government. With a view to such a contingency I shall with great respect, submit to the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, such reflections as have occurred to me upon the subject, after an attentive observation of the character of the Siamese Court, and a due attention to all the circumstances which will arise out of this new state of things. The existing treaty with the State of Queda, formed with its Princes, with-

out the participation or knowledge of the Court of Siam, but sanctioned by an unquestioned occupation of 36 years, must be considered as abrogated by the Siamese conquest, and the British Government is at once exonerated from the payment of the stipend, and as acquiring a right of Sovereignty in Prince of Wales Island. The policy of forming a similar treaty with Siam, even if it were practicable, appears to me to be extremely questionable. With a view of explaining the nature of the opinions which I have been led to entertain on this subject, I shall briefly run over the clauses of the treaty itself. The first and second articles of it, the one stipulating for our right of Sovereignty, and the other for the payment of of the Stipend to the King of Queda, are the only material ones and these in the event of a permanent Siamese conquest become unnecessary. The articles providing in general terms for a free supply of provisions, and the maintenance of a friendly intercourse are probably of small importance, because in this, as in all similar cases, they must be understood as naturally arising out of the acknowledged rights of international law between neighbouring and friendly nations, without the necessity of conventional engagements. Penang depends for its supply upon the State of Queda, and Queda depends for the principal branch of its revenue upon affording Penang this supply, so that whoever may be the ruler of Queda, he

will always find it his interest to maintain a commercial and friendly intercourse with the British Settlement. An article of the treaty provides for the mutual surrender of slaves, and another for that of debtors. Even if these stipulations be legal according to our law, which I presume may be questioned, I venture to submit whether they do not entail more inconvenience than advantage upon our Government by the responsibility and even odium which it incurs in surrendering persons who may be seeking refuge amongst us upon the simple assertion of an arbitrary and despotic Government, which will often avail itself of such stipulations as mere instruments of oppression. One article of the treaty provides for the exclusion of foreign Europeans, but this, I have no scruple in saying, is altogether superfluous under the Siamese Government, the oppressive character of which affords them no encouragement whatever, and scarce the chance of a bare subsistence. Accordingly in Siam itself, which possesses many advantages over Queda, there is not a single individual of this description.

Should the Siamese nation become our neighbours, I may safely venture to assert from what I have seen of it, that its power is just as little dangerous as that of the Malays. Their neighbourhood may even be attended with some advantages, which we could not

derive from the poverty of the latter, and their still more barbarous and irregular form of Government. The Siamese, by being brought into closer relations with us, will become better acquainted with our character and power—will be rendered more dependent upon our friendship and good offices, and by being finally brought to appreciate our forbearance and moderation will learn to repose a more implicit confidence in us than their jealousy and ignorance will at present admit of. Such a state of things will improve and tend to lay open, the commercial resources which their fertile and extensive territory is undoubtedly capable of affording.

In the commencement of our political connexion with the Siamese Government, a firm tone and vigorous conduct will be indispensably requisite. The Siamese are surrounded by weak neighbours whom they have subjugated, and to whom they dictate without resistance. This and their great ignorance of all foreign nations has rendered them, although essentially weak and pusillanimous, vain and arrogant to such an extreme as to fancy themselves nothing less than the very first nation on the globe. These unfounded pretensions mislead them so egregiously that it is scarcely safe even to attempt to conciliate them, and thus the most moderate policy on the part of other nations will always be in danger of being

construed by them into timidity and apprehension for their own power. From my personal experience of this singular and impracticable character, it is now my firm conviction, that had the circumstances of the time warranted the Penang Government in promptly repelling even by a Military force the threatened invasion of the island, the partial invasion of the opposite coast, and the threatening and arrogant language of the Governor of Ligor—that the fears of the Siamese Court would have induced it to have made ample atonement—to have retraced its steps, to have withdrawn its forces from Queda, and even forborne in future from meddling in the affairs of that State.

From our long ignorance of the Siamese nation, we have probably been led to over rate its power and strength. The possession of a wide range of fertile territory affords indeed a comparatively numerous population, and such financial resources as enable the Siamese without any military superiority, to hold in subjection their poor and thinly peopled tributary states. Their own military character is extremely low. The whole population of the country, contrary to the practice of the western nations of Asia, is unarmed, and thus being totally unused to every species of military exercise, and cowed by an exquisite system of tyranny, the Siamese are necessarily a cowardly and

a timid people. It is from a population of this character that their force is levied by an indiscriminate muster and the rabble of peasantry so raised, with old or bad arms put into their hands, constitute their only armies. This barbarous and unorganized force, independent of the perpetual fear of the Government of insurrection, is utterly incapable of offensive operations against the smallest regular force. The Kingdom at the same time in its most vital part is the most defenceless that can be imagined. By far the most valuable branch of the revenue of the kingdom and the principal perquisites of the Officers of Government arise out of the foreign trade which is conducted in the river Me-nam. A single gun-brig, by blockading the river, would put a total stop to the whole of this trade, and two of them would destroy the capital, without possibility of resistance from this vain but weak people; for the Me-nam is accessible to vessels of this description at all seasons, the navigation is obstructed by no danger, and whether for fear of domestic treason, or from supineness, there is not a cannon mounted to defend the capital or the approach to it.

A copy of this despatch has been transmitted to the Honble. the Governor of Prince of Wales Island, with whom I have corresponded by every opportunity since my arrival in Siam.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD,

A. G. G.

Bang Kok

12 July 1822.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, pp. 237-239.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 28 Nov., 1822.

[undated, received
at Bangkok 24
May 1822.]

(Copy)

TRANSLATION of a letter from the
Rajah of Ligor to the Siamese Government.

The army of Queda is now at rest and there is no misunderstanding with the people of Prince of Wales Island. The Governor of Prince of Wales Island has given according to former custom, two small vessels of war to guard the coast. The commander of one of these vessels came to me and a friendly intercourse took place between us. The Governor of P. W. Island and the English are satisfied that the Siamese Army intends them no mischief, and the Governor allows the Siamese to frequent Prince of Wales Island as heretofore. The Commander of the cruizer returned a second time with three Englishmen of rank along with him. These stated that two vessels loaded with rice coming from Bengal had brought a letter from the Governor General (Chao Muang Benkalla) to the Governor of Prince of Wales Island, directing him to consider Queda as a tributary of Siam, and prohibiting him from interfering.

The people of the island Lang Kawi having rebelled, the army went thither, beat them and obtained possession. I sent news of

this to P. W. Island, accusing the King of Queda of having stirred up the Malays of Lang Kawi to rebellion. The Governor of Penang replied saying that the English would not encourage the Rajah of Queda contrary to the interests of the Great King, and that they would by no means interfere in the affairs of Lang Kawi or the other dependencies of Queda, nor permit the King of Queda to send out stores or ammunition to assist the rebels of Lang Kawi.

* *the traders*

The different trading* who come to Queda at present represent the country now as in a state of greater prosperity than at any former period, and they describe the people of Prince of Wales Island as saying amongst themselves that small boats with 4 or 5 men can now go over to Queda with safety. News from the same place also states that the Tangku Abdulla, son of the Rajah of Queda, took a Malay woman, and offered her for sale as a slave. The woman made her complaint in the Court of Justice. The Governor of Penang replied, that if the Prince did so again he should be considered as an offender. A great number of the slaves of the King of Queda have become free since they came to Pulo Penang. The King had punished some of them. This came to the knowledge of the Governor of P. W. Island who sent word to the King to say that he had sought protection under the English

flag, and that he must submit to the customs of the English, which did not admit of individuals taking the law into their own hands, and and that he must seek redress in a Court of Justice.

(A true Copy)

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD,

A. G. G.

A true translation

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD,

A. G. G.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th January 1823.

No. 18.

To W. A. CLUBLEY Esqre.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you for the information of the Honorable the Governor in Council that Captain Thomas MacDonnell of the Mission Ship John Adam has been detected in carrying on an illegal trade to a great extent. A complaint of this conduct has been made to His Excellency the Governor General in Council. With a view of substantiating the charges against him, I have respectfully to request that attested extracts of such goods as Captain MacDonnell may have passed through the Custom House at Prince of Wales Island may be transmitted direct for the information of His Excellency in Council.

I have &ca.

(Sd.) J. CRAWFURD.

Agent to the Governor General.

Bang Kok

18th July 1822.

10659

FORT WILLIAM 15th January 1823.

No. 23.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

It is with great pain that my duty compels me to bring to the notice of the Most Noble the Governor General in Council a circumstance of a most discreditable nature connected with the Mission, which I fear has been of serious prejudice to its interests. Captain Thomas McDonnell, who sailed in command of the Mission Ship from Calcutta, has been detected in trading to a great extent in contravention of the Charter Party, and under circumstances of much aggravation. No cargo appears to have been brought by Captain McDonnell from Calcutta with the exception of a certain quantity of Swedish iron, said to have been introduced as ballast, but at Prince of Wales Island a large investment of various articles of merchandize was laid in, and an additional quantity taken at Singapore. Within a very few days after our arrival at Siam, Captain McDonnell appears to have commenced the sale of this cargo. The principal person with whom he dealt was the very Minister of the Siamese Government with whom I was carrying on a negociation, who abetted him in

this course of proceeding, which, according to Siamese notions, is not reckoned discreditable, although I had publicly informed this officer that there was no description of merchandize on board the ship, and that trading was expressly interdicted to every body connected with the Mission. At this period I was totally unaware of the extent of Captain McDonnell's dealings and imagined that the articles he had consisted of a few curiosities or mere musters. As soon as I suspected what was going forward, but while I had no direct proof of Captain McDonnell's violation of his engagements, I addressed a letter to him prohibiting all intercourse with the officers of the Siamese Government, with a hope of putting a stop to the illegal proceedings, which there was no question he was carrying on. Captain McDonnell thought proper to disclaim the authority of the Agent to the Governor General in subjecting him to this restraint. A second letter was addressed to him enforcing the first orders, but he still persevered in his disobedience. The Charter Party would certainly have authorized me upon this to have removed Captain McDonnell from the command of the ship, but the delicate circumstances under which I was placed left me no remedy but to submit to his disregard of my orders; for the want of officers—the impossibility of knowing how to dispose of Captain McDonnell after being removed at a foreign port—but above all, my

determination, if possible, to preserve unanimity amongst us, and to avoid exhibiting to the Siamese, jealously observing our conduct, a picture of discord in our small party, scarcely left me an alternative. I am in possession of proof that Captain McDonnell's interviews with the Minister on such occasions led to discussions of a very improper nature, and very prejudicial to the interests of the negotiation.

On the 25th of April an act of great indiscretion on the part of Captain McDonnell involved the Mission with the Siamese Government. He had taken into his service a certain Arab, a deserter from a Bombay ship, but living under the protection of the Siamese laws. The Siamese revenue officers had detected this person in the act of smuggling and he was in their custody, when Captain McDonnell, seeing what was going forward from the ship, landed and effected a rescue by intimidating the Siamese by the exhibition of a drawn stiletto. The Siamese Minister immediately complained to me of this outrage, but seemed anxious about nothing but the delivery of the Arab's person. Captain McDonnell upon application being made for the person of the Arab, refused at first to give [him] up, involved me in a tedious correspondence on the subject, and did not finally submit until the 1st of May, when the ship being about to drop down the river, under orders to attempt to

cross the bar, and being threatened with the responsibility for her detention, he had no alternative.

On the 29th of April I addressed a letter to Captain McDonnell, prohibiting every species of trade and even interdicting him from taking goods as ballast. This occasioned another unpleasant and vexatious correspondence. On the return of Captain McDonnell from the bar of the river, however, on the 10th of May, I received a personal pledge from him, that he would rigidly abide by the Charter Party, and I then fully explained to him the sentiments of Government on the subject of trade as enforced in your letter of the 31st January, which I had just then received.

From that time to the end of June, I heard nothing of Captain McDonnell's carrying on trade in violation of the Charter Party, nor have I had any reason to be dissatisfied with his general conduct in other respects. On the 28th of that month, however, I received a letter from Mr. William Storm, owner of the English Brig Phoenix, now lying at this place with a cargo from Calcutta, informing me from information obtained by him at Penang and at Singapore, that Captain McDonnell had brought a large investment on the Mission Ship, and was vending his goods at Siam to the great detriment of the fair trader. Immediately on

[* an omission
apparently
occurs here]

the receipt of this letter I proceeded to seal the hatches of the Mission Ship, preparatory to making the necessary enquiries upon the charges preferred by Mr. Storm. On the 30th with a view of allowing the ship's work to proceed, the seals were removed and a military guard substituted. On the* board the ship attended by Mr. Rutherford, and made seizure of twenty five bales, cases and packages of woollens, chintzes, with cloths and glassware. Captain McDonnell had now offered to pass the bar of the river drawing twelve feet water only although ever since the 1st of May he had refused to pass drawing less than thirteen and half feet. This was in consequence of a certificate furnished to me by Captain Smith of the Phoenix and his first officer declaring that it was perfectly safe and easy to pass the bar of the river with twelve feet. In consequence of this, I had ordered the ship to be immediately prepared for sea, and it became necessary therefore to remove the guard of Sepoys to allow the ship's work to go on, and enable Captain McDonnell, by discharging a portion of the stores and ballast, to lighten the ship to a draft of twelve feet. I had no alternative in this situation except receiving from Captain McDonnell a specification of the goods which had been seized, and a receipt for the whole and a counter receipt by his first officer which I accordingly obtained. On the evening of the

3d of July, I received private information from Mr. Storm and Captain Smith of the Phoenix, that Captain McDonnell was clandestinely landing goods from the Ship John Adam. Steps were immediately taken for the seizure of the goods as they passed along, but it was too late. On the 4th an official communication came to me from Mr. Storm on the subject, and five affidavits were sworn to before me of the fact of goods being landed from the John Adam and traced to the Portuguese factory. A military guard was again sent on board, Captain McDonnell was called upon for an explanation, and his first officer for an attested list and specification of the goods alleged to have been landed from the John Adam. Captain McDonnell in his answer alleged that he was landing various articles with the intention of lightening the ship, and informed me that his first officer could render no account of these articles as they were not delivered over into his charge. In the same letter he tendered his resignation, to prevent, as he said, unpleasant complaints. In a letter which I addressed to Captain McDonnell the following day, I called upon him personally for a specification of the articles which he had landed, and directed that they might be reshipped immediately, or that he would furnish me with an order to receive them wherever they might be found. A letter was at the same time addressed to the first

officer directing him to furnish a list of the goods landed on the 3d with such information as it was in his power to give respecting them. Captain McDonnell in his answer refused compliance with the orders I had given him, and Mr. Dolge, the first officer of the ship, stated that the goods were never delivered into his charge, nor that of any other officer in the ship, and that, as no cargo book was kept, he could only in general state that on the 3d instant no less than five boat loads, consisting of bales, cases &c. had been landed from the ship John Adam and one boat load early on the morning of the 4th and, to the best of his belief, all conveyed to the Portuguese factory. In consequence of this I addressed a letter to the Portuguese Consul, publicly calling upon him to surrender the goods. His answer stated that he was permitted by his Government to trade, that he was unaware of anything illegal in the transactions to which I had alluded, but admitted that he had commercial transactions with Captain McDonnell.

There was good reason now to believe that Captain McDonnell had committed a fraudulent transaction, and for this reason I did not immediately accept his resignation, that I might have an opportunity of investigating his conduct. On the 6th I accordingly sent Lieutenant Rutherford with my clerk on board, directing that the twenty five bales and cases for which I held Captain McDonnell's receipt

should be examined, and that the examination should take place in the presence of Captain McDonnell himself and his officers. Captain McDonnell now refused to permit the goods to be examined, unless I furnished him beforehand with a receipt in full for the goods, and he sent me a sketch in pencil of the receipt which he required. I had no remedy left but to suspend Captain McDonnell from the command of the ship, which I did accordingly, nominating in his room Mr. Brown, late first officer of the ship, who had been dismissed by Captain McDonnell, but who received from him thereafter a certificate stating that he was in all respects fit for the command.

* * * *

It is unnecessary for me to add that the conduct which I have now described has been of serious prejudice throughout to the interests of the Mission, and utterly subversive of those principles of moderation and conciliation so strongly enforced in the instructions of the Most Noble the Genernor General in Council and which I made it my duty to explain and enforce in a public communication on the very first day of our arrival at the Siamese capital.

* * * *

I have &c.

(Sd.) J. CRAWFORD

Agent to the Govenor General.

Bangkok

14th July 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th Janry. 1823.

No. 24.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

Pol. Dept.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

*See *Straits
Settlements* vol. 56.

I had the honor to report for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General in Council in my dispatch of the 10th of June,* that the negociation with the Court of Siam had been brought to a conclusion. The answer to the letter of His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General and the other document alluded to in that dispatch were brought to me on the 12th of the same month, and authenticated translations of them are now enclosed. On these translations being effected, I had the mortification to discover that material alterations had been made in both, but particularly in the latter, in which the clause in favour of a free and fair commerce was changed for a pledge of assistance from the officers of Government. After the many examples I had already had of the want of candor on the part of the officers of the Siamese Government I knew it was in vain to remonstrate and judging that an exposure of this circumstance might possibly lead us into embarrassments I considered it most prudent to forbear even from bringing the matter to the notice of the Siamese Government at all,

and accepted of the documents as they were transmitted. The only concessions gained to our trade are, an invitation to receive it from every quarter, an engagement that the duties shall not be raised beyond their present amount, and that the officers of Government shall aid and assist British merchants in their commercial transactions. Many personal assurances were added to these, which my experience of the Siamese Court forbids me from placing a too implicit reliance upon. I had certainly hoped at one period for the attainment of more solid advantages than those I have now enumerated, but the interests of a powerful party opposed an insuperable obstacle, which no negotiation could overcome. At all events when the full proceedings of the Mission are laid before the Government, I humbly trust that His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General will believe that no pains, diligence or forbearance under difficult circumstances, have been wanting towards effecting the wishes of Government.

The answer to the letter of His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General, it will be perceived, is not in the name of the King. Certain informalities in His Excellency's letter, touching the quality of the paper on which it was written, and similar points with the usage of the Siamese Court on like occasions, were pleaded in apology for His Majesty's not ad-

addressing the Most Noble the Governor General directly. On my part, I declined receiving an answer from the Minister addressed to His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General, and insisted that the letter should be written to one of the Secretaries, in consequence of which it was finally agreed that the Second Minister of the Foreign Department should address the Persian Secretary to the Government. The other document after various attempts to give it the more regular form of a treaty, took its present shape at the spontaneous desire of the Siamese Ministers.

A detailed account of the negociation and other proceedings of the Mission will be laid before the Most Noble the Governor General in Council in due course.

I am happy to be enabled to report that the Mission Ship is preparing to pass the bar of the river on the 19th of this month, with a view to the prosecution of her voyage direct to Cochin China, and I trust that I shall be enabled to report that she has safely passed the bar, by the same opportunity by which this dispatch is transmitted.

I have &c.

(Sd.) J. CRAWFURD

Agent to the Governor General.

Bangkok

13th July 1822.

[NOTE—The translation of the letter of Phraya Pipat Kosa Racha Balat to Mr. Prinsep, dated 26 May 1822, is printed in Crawford's *Journal, Embassy to Siam*, pp. 172-174.]

FORT WILLIAM 25th Jany. 1823.

No. 25.

Translation of the letter of Phraya Chula Racha Muntri to Mr. Crawford.

The letter of Phraya Chula Racha Muntri, Collector of the Customs and Duties on Ships in the Port of the Court of Prah Maha Nakon Si-Ayuthia, to Mr. Crawford.

The Lord of the Kingdom of Bengal (Chao Muang Benkalla) commanded Mr. Crawford to come to Siam to open a way to friendship and commerce, and to request permission for English ships to trade to this capital, and permission to buy and sell with the Merchants of Siam, paying duties as formerly. The Rajah Prah-Klang directs me to express his satisfaction at the contents of the letter of the Lord of the Kingdom of Bengal, and to address a letter to Mr. Crawford in the form of an Agreement to say, that if English merchant ships come to the port of the capital, upon their arrival at the mouth of the river they shall be searched by the Governor of Paknam, and their small arms and cannon landed according to former custom, and then the ship be conducted to the capital. As soon as they are anchored the Collector of Customs shall afford all assistance in buying and selling with the merchants of Siam, and

the duties and charges shall not be more than heretofore, nor afterwards be raised. Let English merchants come to Siam to sell and buy in conformity with this Agreement.

This letter of Agreement was written on Thursday, in the 7th month, the 2d day of the Dark Half of the Moon, in the year of the Horse (10th June one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two.)

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87,
pp. 286-289.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 12 Dec., 1822.

AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

Agent to the
Governor General
2 Dec. 1822.

To W. S. CRACROFT Esquire,
Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

The instructions delivered to me by the Honorable the Governor and Council on my way to Siam having pointed out the Dindings, or rather the Island of Pangkur in the Straits of Malacca, as eligible for a commercial establishment and a desirable acquisition from the Prince of Pera through the authority of his liege, the King of Siam, with a view of possessing myself of the best information respecting it, I touched upon it in my way down the Straits, and have herewith the honor to submit an attested extract from my official journal respecting it.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

A. G. G.

Penang

2d Dec. 1822.

Extract from the Journal of the Agent to the Governor General on a Mission to the Eastward.

As an European Establishment, with which view it has been contemplated, this island, though the harbour be good, more easily accessible than any other which has been named for this purpose, and far more in the direct track of native commerce than Penang, is certainly upon the whole unsuitable. It is on the one hand too far into the Straits for a place of resort and refreshment for our navy in the Bay of Bengal, and on the other much too far to the west to be an emporium for the commerce of the nations to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca. Independent of these primary objections there seems scarcely a spot on the Island level enough for cultivation or even for convenient and comfortable habitation.

The prospect of deriving any benefit from the working of tin mines in this island, even under an European Government, supposing the ore to exist in sufficient abundance, appears to me to be more than questionable. The whole island is an abrupt, hard, granitic rock, from which the ore could not be extracted with any profit in the state of skill and industry which exists among the natives of the country, or even among the Chinese themselves. In Banca and other places, where abundance of tin is produced in these countries, the ore is found

in situations extremely different, that is, in streams through the soil of the low lands, from which it is easily extracted, readily melted, and finally, when smelted, affording a metal of superior value to what is obtained by the laborious process of mining in rocky districts.

(A true Copy)

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD

A. G. G.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, p.p. 289-291.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 12 Dec., 1822.

IT APPEARING that the views of this Government respecting the Island of Pankour had not appeared to Mr. Crawford in the same light as was intended, the following explanatory letter was addressed to him on the subject.

To JOHN CRAWFORD Esquire
Agent to the Most Noble the
Governor General.

Sir,

I have the honor by direction of the Honble. the Governor in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2d Instant and its enclosure, respecting the Island of Pankour.

In expressing the acknowledgments of Government for the information obtained by you, and in reference to the Minute by the President dated the 29 September 1819,* an Extract from which formed a part of Enclosure 12 in Mr. Secretary Clubley's letter of the 31 December 1821,* I am directed to observe that this Government, notwithstanding the permission of the Supreme Government, granted in March 1819,

*See *Straits Settlements*, vol. 72.

*See *Straits Settlements*, vol. 81.

did not consider the subject of sufficient consequence to undertake the occupation of Pankour as a British Settlement of importance and consequent expense, but merely contemplated the possession of a right, recognized by the Siamese Court, to establish a small military post there for the better suppression of piracy, and for encouraging a trade between Perak and this Island, in tin, as an advantage which, if the same could have been attained without entering into negotiations which might have been troublesome to the Mission, it might have been worth while to obtain.

I have &c-

(Signed) W. S. CRACROFT

Actg. Secy. to Govt.

Fort Cornwallis

4 December 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th January 1823.

No. 31.

Political Dept.

TO GEORGE SWINTON Esqre.

Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

At the termination of the Mission to the Eastward I have the honor to lay before His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor General in Council a general summary of its results in the Scientific Department.

* * * *

Five Charts upon a large scale of the Eastern Coast and head of the Gulf of Siam; a chart of the river of Siam on a large scale from actual survey; an outline chart of the Gulf of Siam; a chart of the group of islands called Si-chang in the Gulf of Siam from an actual survey; a delineation of a portion of the Anambas Islands in the China Seas, and a chart of a portion of the North-West Coast of Borneo, being in all ten charts. To these are added a descriptive Memoir.

The whole of the coasts and countries delineated in those charts have either never been described or delineated before, or much less accurately so than by Mr. Brown.

* * * *

In relation to the Surveying Department, it is almost unnecessary for me to submit that

the cautions recommended in the instructions of the Government on this subject have been strictly attended to. At Siam, the express permission of the Government was obtained for using our surveying and astronomical instruments. . . .

* * * *

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD

Agent to the Governor General.

Kedgeriee

29th December 1822.

Bengal Political
Communications,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th Jan., 1823.

No. 34.

List of presents from the King of Siam
. . . for His Excellency the Most Noble the
Governor General, &c. &c.

From the King of Siam.

- 108 Slabs of Tin.
- 3 Boxes and 2 Baskets of Gum Gamboge.
- 9 Bags of Cardamoms
- 13 Bags of Eagle Wood.
- 4 Bags of Benjamin.
- 10 Elephants Teeth.
- 214 Bags of Sugar.
- 272 Bags of Pepper.

For the Agent to the Governor General.

- 61 Bags of Sugar.

* * * * *

(Signed) J. CRAWFORD,
A. G. G.

FORT WILLIAM 5th Jan., 1823.

No. 40.

Pol. Dept.

To J. CRAWFORD Esqre,
&ca. &ca. &ca.

Sir,

1. Your dispatches . . . reporting the progress and transactions of your Mission and its return to Calcutta, having been submitted to the Honorable the Governor General in Council, I am now directed to communicate to you the following observations and orders of Government on the several points to which they respectively relate.

2. The Honorable the Governor General in Council is necessarily precluded from forming a conclusive judgment on the exact degree in which the various objects contemplated by the Mission have been attained until the details of your proceedings shall have been submitted by you; but from the summary statements now before Government it affords him much gratification to observe that the essential points of establishing a more friendly and liberal commercial relation with the Kingdoms of Siam and Cochin China, appear to have been successfully accomplished to as great an extent as was anticipated by Government, considering the well known jealousy of intercourse with European Nations

entertained by the barbarous Courts to which you were accredited.

3. At Cochin China in particular your reception appears to have been extremely friendly, and the concessions in favour of our trade with respect to imposts, as well as the general assurances of protection and encouragement, hold out a fair prospect of a considerable extension of commercial speculation in that quarter. The information also contained in your dispatches, relative to the resources and political character of those kingdoms, is considered to be highly interesting.

4. In as far therefore as the summary reports now before him furnish materials for forming a judgment, the Governor General in Council is satisfied that you have employed every effort to promote the objects of the Mission entrusted to your charge, and that to your judicious and conciliatory conduct in your intercourse with the singular people with whom you had to deal is mainly to be ascribed the favourable impression which the Mission appears to have produced at the Courts of both Siam and Cochin China. It is also highly satisfactory to the Honorable the Governor General in Council to learn that the conduct of all the officers attached to your Mission has been such as to merit your warm commendation in the discharge of their several duties.

5. I now proceed to advert specifically to such of your dispatches as require any particular notice at the present moment, reserving a further communication of the sentiments of Government on the general question for a future opportunity, when the promised details of your Mission shall have been taken into consideration.

Dispatches*
dated 28th June
and 14th July.

* (See note.)

6. The dispatches adverted to in the margin, relating to the question of the Swedish iron and the misconduct of Captain McDonnell, will be transmitted to the Marine Board with directions to institute such further enquiries into those transactions as may enable Government to determine to what extent the owners are liable under the Charter Party to pay the value of all such merchandize shipped on board the John Adam without your knowledge and consent, (such merchandize being declared liable to confiscation) or to a demand at least for freight as well as for a demurrage during the whole period the ship was detained at Siam through the misconduct of the Commander.

* * * * *

Dispatch*
12th July.

* See Straits
Settlements vol. 57.

8. This dispatch contains the report of your discussions with the Court of Siam relative to Queda and other tributary states in which the Government of Prince of Wales Island is concerned. On these questions I am directed to state to you, that the tenor of your commu-

nications to the Siamese Court is considered to have been extremely judicious. It is highly satisfactory to the Honorable the Governor General in Council to learn that you consider the result of your discussions with the Court of Siam to have established a virtual acknowledgment of our right of sovereignty in Penang and the land on the Peninsula, and that even in the event of the Malay Government of Queda being permanently superseded by the establishment of a Siamese authority in that quarter, you do not apprehend any injurious consequences to the interests of Prince of Wales Island from such a revolution.

9. In such a contingency as that above supposed, the Honorable the Governor General in Council entirely concurs with you on the grounds stated in your dispatch in the impolicy of forming a new treaty with a Siamese Government of Queda, similar to that existing with the present exiled King, now residing under our protection at Penang.

Two dispatches
dated 29th*
December.

* (*See ante.*)

10. These dispatches refer to the presents received from the Kings of Siam and Cochin China, and to those intended for the latter which have been brought back. With regard to all articles of presents, you will be pleased to deliver them over to the Acting Persian Secretary, who will be instructed to receive

charge of them and dispose of them under the
orders of Government.

* * * * *

I have &c.

(Signed) G. SWINTON

Secry. to Govt.

Council Chamber,
15th January 1823.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 89, pp. 1-3.
(2nd set of paging).

FORT CORNWALLIS the 6 March 1823.

Mr. Secretary
Swinton Port
William 25 • Jan.
1823.

Mr. SECRY. SWINTON, FORT WILLIAM.

To W. A. CLUBLEY Esquire
Secretary to Government of
Prince of Wales Island.

Sir,

Adverting to the subject of Mr. Crawford's
despatch to my address of the 13th July last,*
relative to the affairs of Queda, in connection
with the Government of Siam, of which a copy
is already in the possession of the Honorable
the Governor in Council, I am directed to in-
timate to you, that the Honorable the Governor
General in Council will be happy to receive
a communication of the sentiments of the
Government of Penang on the various topics
therein discussed.

* See *Bengal Pol.*
Cons. Range 123
vol. 27.

2. It will be sufficient to remark on the
present occasion that the general tenor of Mr.
Crawford's discussions with the Court of Siam
relative to Queda, has been approved by the
Governor General in Council, and that Mr.
Crawford's views with regard to the future
policy to be observed towards the kingdom of
Queda and other Petty States tributary to
Siam, and the inexpediency of forming a new

treaty similar to the one now subsisting with
Queda in the event of its becoming the seat
of a Siamese authority, appear to be judicious.

I have &c.

(Signed) G. SWINTON,
Secy. to Govt.

Fort William
15 January 1823.

Bengal Political
Communications,
Range 123, vol. 36.

FORT WILLIAM 11th April 1823.

No. 20.

Polit. Dept.

To GEORGE SWINTON Esqre.

Secretary to Government.

Sir,

(* not copied.)

* (See Ser. Sett.
vol. 30.)

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date [31 March 1823],* with enclosed copy of dispatch from the Government of Prince of Wales's Island* and translation of a letter from the Siamese Minister*, and directing me to submit such remarks as might occur to me on the subject of the letter.

I have already had the honor of laying before the Government a faithful narrative of the proceedings of the mission and of my negotiations with the Court of Siam and in a few days my final report on the same subject will be presented. It will not therefore be necessary for me at present to enlarge upon this subject, and I shall confine myself to such observations as are suggested by the objections advanced against my public proceedings in the letter of the Siamese Minister.

The first objection that seems to be urged against me is, that I exceeded my instructions by asking for more than I was authorized. This allegation is so little consonant to fact

that in the demands made by me in my negotiation I really did not go one half the length to which my instructions might have authorized me. I claim indeed no merit for this, for upon a nearer view of the Siamese Government I soon discovered that many of the objects contemplated in my instructions, however valuable, their execution was impracticable and unattainable, and in forbearing to urge them I observed only that degree of discretion which must necessarily have been practised by any person of common prudence in my situation. It would have been agreeable to my instructions, for example, to have requested an exemption from the vexatious mode of levying the export and import duties. It would have been agreeable to them also to have requested a free trade in the articles of Royal monopoly, and it would have been in accordance with my instructions from Penang to have demanded a cession of territory and a direct trade with the dependencies of the Siamese Government. The agitation of such questions, however, which I knew must prejudice our interests, was carefully avoided, and I confined myself to a few necessary points such as would place our trade on a practical footing for our merchants, trusting to time, good fortune, and good conduct for enlarging it.

With respect to my having ever asked permission for British merchants to reside in

Siam, this is a point which I can safely deny. I never thought such a thing practicable or useful, and upon this subject I need only refer to the strong opinion which I expressed respecting the impracticability of Europeans residing under any circumstances under the Siamese Government in my despatch respecting the affairs of Queta and Penang.

I must take the liberty here, however, of suggesting, having seen the original Malay letter, that the expression rendered Resident Merchants in the Penang translation has probably reference to the establishment of a British commercial agent. It will be seen on reference to the papers laid before Government by Mr. Morgan that the Prince Krom Chiat and the very Minister who is the author of the present allegation, themselves suggested the establishment of a British consulship. If the charge should be found to refer to this, Mr. Morgan also, both in writing and conversation, urged upon my attention the establishment of a Consulship as the only possible means of giving security to British merchants frequenting Siam, and when I arrived at that place itself I actually found a Portuguese one promised, while the very individual who was to fill the latter was named to me by the Prah Klang himself. Under all these circumstances it will not appear surprizing that the establishment of a consulship should have appeared to

me a practicable and useful measure. I suggested it accordingly, but when I acquired a better knowledge of the character of the Siamese, I soon discovered the propriety of abandoning the demand. I must observe, however, in regard to it that no disinclination was ever expressed towards the appointment by the Siamese negotiators.

• The Prah Klang's letter gratuitously imagines that to make any thing the subject of negotiation not expressly specified in the Governor General's letter was an exceeding of my orders, yet he was fully aware that His Excellency's letter referred to his agent for all particulars, and he chose frequently in conversation to make this very point the subject of personal complaint to myself, artfully congratulating me on the confidence reposed in me by so high an authority.

I trust that Government will scarcely think it necessary for me to disavow the indiscreet curiosity ascribed to me where I and the gentlemen of the Mission are represented as drawing maps and sounding rivers. Express permission was indeed given by the Prah Klang himself to make free use of our astronomical and surveying instruments within a fortnight after our arrival, and this permission was voluntarily confirmed by his chief, the Prince Krom Chiet. It so happened, however, that neither

the astronomical nor surveying instruments were ever made use of, and that the greater number of them were never even taken out of their cases during our stay at Siam, owing to the accidental sickness of the officer in charge of them. The step of surveying a group of desert islands at the head of the gulf, if this be alluded to, could certainly have had no bearing whatever upon the interests of the mission for it took place near a month after we had quitted Siam, and I think scarcely less than two after the negotiation had terminated.

I can solemnly declare that the whole of my intercourse with the Siamese Court was most punctiliously guarded, and that the utmost forbearance was shown under circumstances more irksome and painful than it has been the usual lot of persons holding such trusts as I did to submit to. The ceremonial prescribed at our introduction to the King, for example, was cheerfully complied with, no impatience was ever displayed at the delays and subterfuges practised by the Minister himself to annoy and perplex us, and we were so far from sounding rivers or making charts that for my own part I seldom went abroad without a confidential person from this very minister to accompany me, while the trifling drawings which were made of temples and other objects of curiosity were frequently sent to him for his satisfaction. One other proof of my de àre

* [an omission
apparently
occurs here.]

to conciliate* himself that I might visit the Princes and Chiefs opposed to his own party at the Court, but evidently as if he would have been happy that I declined doing so. To prevent giving umbrage and to avoid throwing obstacles of any sort in the way of the mission, I accordingly declined visiting every person unconnected with the party to which he belonged and I may add that he was pleased to make this discretion and forbearance on my part the subject of personal compliment upon several occasions.

That I spared no pains on all occasions to obtain information respecting the state of the country and especially of its commercial interests is what I am proud to avow. This was especially pointed out to me as an object of attention in my instructions, and to have neglected it would have appeared to me a desertion of duty. Whatever information has been obtained will be faithfully laid before the Government and I confess I have cause to fear that it may be considered that we have rather effected too little than too much with regard to the means employed in our enquiries. The only fair subject of comparison to which I can refer is the first mission of Col : Symes to the Burmas, a people of similar manners and similar prejudices with the Siamese, and here I find that a professed surveyor was employed, that surveying and astronomical in-

struments were freely used, that a complete survey of the river Irawady was the result, and that a great deal of general information respecting the state of the country was besides obtained.

Of the vague rumours attempted to be put in the mouth of my two interpreters, I sincerely believe that there is not the slightest foundation for them, and I had every reason to be satisfied with the fidelity [of] both these persons. In respect to the objects of the Mission I purposely made them acquainted with it that through their casual conversation with the natives our real intention might be conveyed through channels less suspected than my own direct assertions, or that of the other European gentlemen of the mission, and I have every reason to believe that the efforts which I made with this in view were not unsuccessful. I had direct testimony that the Chinese and Siamese merchants would have been glad to have seen a fair trade established with us, and I am convinced that all understood our true motives except those who were directly interested in misinterpreting them.

The Malay interpreters continued at Siam contrary to my judgment, but at their own earnest desire, in hopes of passing across the Peninsula [and] of returning more speedily to their families at Penang. In this they were

disappointed, for I had no sooner gone away than they were seized upon, and it appears from the letter of the Honble. the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island that they are down to this moment forcibly detained. Under these circumstances, what story may have been extorted from their fears it is impossible to say, nor does it seem of much importance.

With respect to the conduct of individuals of our own nation in their intercourse with the Siamese, I cannot deny that upon some occasions it was extremely indiscreet, such as to embarrass me, and perhaps finally to leave on the minds of the Siamese an unpleasant impression of our national character. The greater part of this misconduct, however, having taken place after the Mission quitted Siam, had necessarily no bearing upon its interests, nor vexatious as it proved to me, have I ever ascribed to it our failure to obtain a fair trade at Siam.

This failure had its principal source in a cause which, I presume here once more to repeat it, the most skilful negotiation and the most conciliatory conduct in every party directly or indirectly concerned could not have been adequate to remove. The party with which I negotiated drew its whole profits and emoluments from the very restrictions which it was my object to remove and without re-

moving which an intercourse with Siam can be of no value to any European nation. The real circumstances of the European trade were known only to this party, and kept a snug job in their own hands, while the Government derived little or no benefit by the intercourse. Of this party the Prah Klang, the author of the letter upon which I am remarking, is the active agent. He is abetted by his chief, the Prince Krom-Chiat, and assisted by a knot of naturalized Mahommedans, descendants of settlers from the coast of Coromandel, a keen and subtle race of people, who share in the perquisites derived from the trade. The Prah Klang is himself a man, for his situation, of very considerable talents, but extremely rapacious. His deceit and subtility would be more successful if his open and frequent practice of them did not render them too obvious and notorious. I was sufficiently advised of the character of this individual before coming to Siam, and while he was making the fairest professions I received authentic intelligence, before I was above a few days in the country, that he was already intriguing [against] the main object of the Mission—a licence for free and fair trade. Of the shifts and expedients which he employed to effect this object sufficient evidence is already in possession of Government in the journal of the Mission. But in defence of my own reputation I shall adduce

one more example of this disposition which I have not submitted to Government before because I attached no other value to it than as it afforded me convincing evidence of the real character of this individual. Having learnt that the Commander of the John Adam was a dissatisfied person he did not scruple to tamper with this individual and to practise upon his indiscretion. Warned of this I expressly prohibited the latter from holding all intercourse with him but was disobeyed. Upon one occasion he was led into a conversation of a most improper nature, and of the real character of which he was so little aware that he insisted upon delivering a paper containing the substance of it to me as a public document. Such imprudent conduct as is here described may readily be supposed to have afforded the Prah Klang grounds for having made the charge against the same individual in his letter of asserting that it was the intention of the English to invade the country. I now beg leave to annex this paper as affording an authentic proof of the character which I have ascribed to the Prah Klang, as well [as] of the troublesome nature of those other obstacles which I had occasionally to encounter in the course of my negotiation.

I shall now beg leave to conclude my remarks upon the letter of the Siamese Minister by respectfully offering it as my opinion that

the whole is dictated by fear and apprehension, in the first place for having evaded, by unworthy subterfuges, our just and equitable demands on the subject of commerce, in the second for having refused to arrange on equitable grounds the affair of Queda, and lastly from a consciousness that the very illiberal and irritating conduct which he himself pursued towards private individuals of our nation was in a great measure the cause of those indiscretions which were committed.

I may here finally observe that during the whole of our long stay of nearly four months in Siam, not a whisper was breathed of the allegations now brought forward. Indeed upon the very day and night I embarked, I received from the Minister, but especially from the Prince, stronger professions of friendship and goodwill than upon any former occasion. The answer to the letter of the Governor General which I brought back not only expresses no dissatisfaction, but is couched in terms of friendly acknowledgment. This letter however was delivered into my own hands and it might not therefore be thought discreet to make me the bearer of a complaint against myself. That complaints however have been made in the answer to the letter of the Governor of Penang, which I received sealed ten days after quitting Siam, but this also was couched in very amicable language. Many other oppor-

tunities might have occurred since I quitted Siam, but the necessity of making out a case does not appear to have occurred to the Prah Klang for at least seven months after my departure. It may finally be remarked that throughout the whole of the Prah Klang's letter, although much regret be feigned at the failure of the objects of the Mission, no hint whatever is given of a desire to place that trade upon that equitable footing which he knows to be the object of our wishes which requires only the sanction of his party and might be conveyed in a few sentences.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

Calcutta

3d April 1823.

FORT WILLIAM 11th April 1823.

No. 20 Contd.

Copy of a paper given in by the Commander
of the Mission Ship.

Questions put to me by the Minister yesterday.

Question. Do you positively go to Cochin China after Siam.

Answer. Yes.

Question. Does the Ambassador intend seeing the King of Cochin China.

Answer. Certainly it is the object for which he visits Cochin China.

Question. What is this object.

Answer. To establish commerce and a friendly intercourse between the two nations.

Question. How many musquets have you for the King of Cochin China.

Answer. That question relates to the Ambassador and not to me.

Question. I see that you fear the Ambassador.

Answer. I do not fear my King, there is only One whom I fear, that is my God—
an Englishman is a stranger to fear.

Question. But you must know what the pre-

sents consist of, and whether there are musquets among them.

Answer. To say that I do not know what the presents consist of would be an untruth ; why do you ask me this question when I told the Prince in your presence that questions of this nature related to the Ambassador and do not concern me, my business being entirely with the ship.

Question. I ask you merely as a friend about the musquets.

Answer. Were you to ask me generally what the presents consist of I should make the same reply as I have done about the muskets, and if you are my friend, refrain from putting questions to me relating to the Ambassador, for I must decline answering them, his business is entirely political, and it does not become me to interfere, any other questions I shall be most happy to answer.

Question. I only wished to try you, but I find your answers very proper and I shall say no more on the subject.

Answer. It is not right to question me. Your King's objects and plans are

not known to every body and why should ours be—all that I can say is that our present object is peace and commerce.

Question. There is a disagreement between the Chinese and English at Canton.

Answer. I am aware that there is (I then related what we had heard) but the Chinese had better not irritate the English, for we can both make and break Kings, as we have often done before.

Question. The Chinese are a very populous nation.

Answer. They are, but it is in the power of the English to annihilate them when they please, and that in less than a year.

Question. The Emperor of China thinks himself the greatest King on earth.

Answer. The Emperor of China is made to believe so, and is kept in ignorance by his high officers of state, and may not know the strength and power of the English. We are inclined to be peaceable but should a war be declared between the two nations the English would drive the Chinese before them like a flock of sheep, and lay waste their country.

What could the Emperor of China do against a nation of warriors.

Question. I know very well that what you say is true.

Answer. It is but too true, and the more enlightened Chinese residing at Canton who *now* know our power dread a rupture between the two nations.

Question. Would not the English suffer very much from losing their trade.

Answer. They might for a short time. The Chinese derive as much advantage from the trade as we do, and would regret the trade being stopped more than the English. We do not depend on China for trade, more particularly now when we are at peace with all the world.

Question. Where do you go after Cochin China.

Answer. Where the Ambassador pleases.

Question. Do you go to Macao and Manilla.

Answer. I believe we shall, but the Governor General of India has given the Ambassador such power, that he can order the ship to go where he thinks proper.

Question. Is that written down in his instructions.

Answer. I do not know ; the Governor General of India places such confidence in the Ambassador's judgment and ability that I should think not.

Question. The Ambassador will have a long journey to make when he goes to Cochin China, as the King lives a great distance from Saigon.

Answer. How far from Saigon does the King live.

Question. A very, very long way, fifty days' journey.

Question. Has the Ambassador letters for Macao and Manila.

Answer. I believe not.

Question. Why does he go to those places.

Answer. It is his pleasure.

Question. Was the King of Queda at Penang when you were there.

Answer. Yes.

Question. Why did he leave his country.

Answer. He was obliged to leave it I believe.

Question. The Siamese wished to march through his country to make war

on the Burmahs. The King of Queda is tributary to the King of Siam and ought to have allowed the Siamese a passage through his country.

Answer. I believe the Siamese soldiers committed great havoc in the K. of Queda's dominions and compelled him to fly.

Question. Is it not disgraceful for a King to quit his country like a coward instead of defending it.

Answer. Yes, certainly.

Question. Would the English make war on the Siamese if they invaded Queda, and what would the English do if a war took place between the two countries.

Answer. I cannot answer that question. The King of Queda is an ally of ours ; it is the English custom to defend their friends and place them in safety. Should the King of Siam become our ally then your question is easily answered.

Question. What would the English do in that case.

Answer. They would do all in their power to effect a peace between the two

countries in such a way that both Kings should come off with honor. The English have often done this before, and have saved much blood. It is their wish that nations should be at rest.

Question. Good.

Question. Has the Ambassador much trade on board.

Answer. To my certain knowledge not a pin's worth.

Question. I was told that he had.

Answer. Whoever told you so, told a falsehood and wished to throw discredit on the Ambassador. It is beneath an English Ambassador's dignity to trade, or the dignity of any man in an official situation, in our King's service. An officer would be degraded and dismissed his employments were it known that he had anything to do with trade. When out of the King's service a man may trade as much as he pleases. Trade with us is always considered respectable when not connected with the King's Service, for both cannot be attended to faithfully.

Question. Very just.

After some further conversation about the English mode of fighting duels, the trade of Siam, as to its imports and exports, and other topics, I left the Minister.

(Signed) T. McDONNELL.

Ship John Adam
14th Apl. 1822.

(A true Copy)

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

Bengal Political
Consultations.
Bangs 123, vol. 42.

FORT WILLIAM 27th June 1823.

No. 13.

Pol. Dept.

To G. SWINTON Esqr.
Secretary to the Govt.

Sir,

* See printed ac-
count of Crawford's
Mission to Siam.

Having in the annexed Journal* of my proceedings given an ample narrative of every circumstance relating to my intercourse and negociations with the Governments of Siam and Cochin China, I shall confine myself in this report to exhibiting a general view of the condition of these countries and of the political results of the Mission, reserving all detailed and minute statements for other opportunities.

1. Beginning with Siam which became the first object of enquiry, this kingdom, although reduced in its geographical limits within the last half century by the encroachments of the Burmans, is probably at present a country of more solid strength and resources than at any former period of its history. Its territory is of very irregular form and it would be difficult or impossible in the present state of our knowledge to give a true estimate of its superficies. The Siamese race extends however to the south as far as 7° North latitude, and the Malayan tributaries of Siam as far as 3° . To the North, the extreme confines of the Siamese territory extend, as far as we could

learn, to latitude 25° . On the Bay of Bengal, however, the Siamese territories reach at present no further than the port of Tavoy belonging to the Burmans in Latitude 13° North and Longitude 98° East. On the East coast of the Gulf of Siam its territories extend to Latitude 11° and to Longitude 104° East as far as the port and town of Athien or Kang-Kao, which itself is in possession of the Cochin Chinese. The neighbours of the Siamese to the North West are the Pegu or Mon race, subject to the Burmans; to the North the Burmans and Chinese of the Province of Yunan; and to the East and South East the Kambojans and Cochin Chinese.

2. The principal race inhabiting the Siamese territory consists of six distinct nations, vizt: the proper Siamese; the Lao or Laos; the Pegu or Mon; the Kambojans; the Malay and the Chinese. The whole population according to the best accounts which I could obtain amounts to about 5,000,000 in the following proportions.

Siam and Lao (considered equally				
populous)	...	...	...	4,200,000
Peguers	...	...	...	42,000
Kambojans	...	...	...	50,000
Malays	...	...	...	15,000
Chinese	...	...	...	700,000
				<hr/>
				5,142,000

3. The proper Siamese race inhabits generally the alluvial tract of the Me-nam at the upper end of the Gulf. The Lao race inhabits the territory lying to the North of these, and generally from the latitude of 18° to 25° . They have long been subject to the Siamese and speak a dialect of the same language. The Peguers are a small remnant of that race who have sought refuge under the Siamese Government from the greater tyranny of the Burmans, by whom about fifty years [ago] they were conquered. The ancient kingdom of Kamboja was about 36 years ago dismembered. A portion of it then fell into [the] hands of the Siamese, a much larger one into those of [the] Cochin Chinese, and a portion still remains independent under its own race of kings. This event explains how the Kambojans came to form a portion of the subjects. The Malay States tributary to Siam are five in number, two of these, vizt. Pera and Queda are situated upon the West Coast of the Peninsula, and three—Patani, Tringanu and Kalantan upon the East. All these have unquestionably been more or less dependent upon Siam from the earliest knowledge of Europeans.

4. The Chinese whose numbers are at present so great, are scattered over every part of the country in the same manner as they are found among the islands of the Indian Archipelago. They are chiefly however found at

the seats of commerce and industry, engaged in the smelting and manufacture of iron, in the culture of pepper, in the culture of the sugar cane and manufacture of sugar, and in trade. At Bangkok, the capital, it is supposed they are equally numerous with the native population. In the end of the 17th century I find their numbers nowhere rated at above 4 or 5,000. About 30 years ago there sat upon the throne of Siam a king of the half Chinese race, and it was through the extraordinary encouragement which he gave to his countrymen that they were induced to resort to the country and settle it in such numbers. This extraordinary accession of Chinese population constitutes almost the only great and material change which has taken place in the state of the kingdom during many centuries.

5. The natural advantages of Siam in point of harbours, rivers and internal navigation are very considerable. The navigation of the Gulf itself is one of the safest and easiest in the Eastern Seas. On its west coast are the ports of Sungora and Ligor, and that of Bandon less known. This last is formed by the mouth of a river, where there is 14 or 15 feet water and which is therefore navigable for vessels of considerable burden. At the head of the bay are three ports formed by the three *embouchures* of the Mé-nam. At the western and the middle one of these, called Mek-long and Ta-

chin, no more than eight feet water are found at spring tides, so that they are inaccessible to vessels of any considerable burden. The eastern branch of the Me-nam, or that of Bangkok, is the great port of Siam. This is navigable with ease and safety to all merchant vessels under 250 tons.

6. Towards the eastern coast of the Gulf we determined by actual survey the merits of one harbour, that of the Si-Chang islands. From this indeed down to the latitude of 11° the coast is so thickly crowded with islands, having navigable channels and good anchorage between them, that it may almost be looked upon as one great harbour throughout. The principal ports of native commerce in this quarter are Chantabun and Tungyai, the principal seats of the culture and trade of pepper, cardamums and gamboge. Chantabun, the most important, has an extensive Chinese population engaged in the pepper culture. The town is about 15 miles up a small river, which has no more than 5 feet as its entrance, but off this, where there is shelter behind the neighbouring islands, it has water enough for ships of considerable size. To these ports the Siamese do not admit strangers.

7. The conquests of the Burmans have nearly cut the Siamese off from all connection with the Bay of Bengal. In this direction they possess only the ports of Junk Ceylon and

Bang-ri, at present very little frequented. Tavoy and Mergui, the principal ports, are in the hands of the Burmans, and the inhabitants in this quarter being a conquered and dissatisfied people these are of little use to themselves or to strangers. Their exclusion from the navigation of the Bay of Bengal affords a subject of great uneasiness to the Siamese Court and to regain possession of their ports in that quarter is at present one of the great objects of its ambition and policy.

8. The facilities for internal navigation and intercourse possessed by Siam are also very considerable. Two great rivers are under the territory of Siam—the Me-nam and the river of Kamboja,—but the latter which passes through and empties itself within the territory of Cochin China is comparatively of little importance with the former. It passes however through Laos and the capital of that country is situated upon it. The Me-nam and its branches afford at their mouths conveniences for navigation of the most favourable nature over a track of 70 miles broad and further to the north over a still wider area. The whole course of the Me-nam extends to between 7 and 800 miles and from the best accounts we could collect it appears to be navigable for boats fit to carry merchandize to the extent of 400 miles. The boats which conduct an in-

tercourse with places beyond this are compelled by the shallowness of the river to wait the period of its rising to proceed in their annual voyages to the capital.

By the river of Bang-Pakong and by canals of communication Siam is connected with Kamboja by a navigation of 20 days. Several routes cross the Peninsula, and connect the Bay of Siam with that of Bengal and the Straits of Malacca. From Queda to Singora merchandize is carried across the Peninsula on elephants in five days. From Trang on the Western to Ligor on the Eastern coast of the Peninsula the distance by elephants is about 3 days journey, and a man on foot may travel dispatch in two. Another frequented route is from Punpin, opposite to Junk Ceylon, to Bandon which is parallel to it on the other coast. By all these routes very considerable quantities of European and Indian merchandize find their way to Siam, and in particular, they become outlets of importance to the trade of Prince of Wales's Island.

9. In considering this subject I may advert to the incalculable advantages which would result to general commerce from the existence of an easy and safe communication by water between the Gulf of Bengal and Siam. The result of the enquiries which I made on the subject is, that such a communication would be most easily effected and would be most use-

ful in about the latitude of 8° North. Between the head of the river of Bandon, which as already mentioned admits vessels drawing 14 or 15 feet water, and the head of the river of Ponga, which itself falls into the western sea behind Junk Ceylon, and the numerous small islands in this direction, where there is shelter from the monsoons, the distance is said to be but two days' ordinary journey. Were such a communication practicable Siam and Cochin China would be brought nearer to us by a distance equal to 16° of latitude, while the precarious and tedious navigation of the Straits of Malacca would be altogether avoided.

10. The wide extent of the Siamese dominions admits of great diversity of soil and productions, and I believe I may safely say that no country in the world is more highly gifted by nature. Its productions in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdom are not only of great variety, but such as are well suited to stimulate commercial enterprize and attract the resort of foreign nations.

11. In the mineral kingdom the products are iron, tin, copper, lead and gold. The iron mines are found at from 200 to 300 miles distance from the capital and to the North of it either directly in the neighbourhood of the river or very near to it. Much of the ore is imperfectly smelted upon the spot, and in this state carried down to the capital, where it is

fabricated into culinary and other utensils. The Chinese have of late years entered with spirit into the smelting and manufacture of iron, and consequently it forms at present one of the most valuable articles of exportation, and is sent in large quantities to the Malayan islands, Kamboja and Cochin China. The small labour at which this product is obtained in Siam is implied in its price—a picul of the common bar iron costing no more than 4 Rupees.

12. Tin in Siam is diffused over more extensive geographical limits than in any other part of the world, and for productiveness the mines of Junk Ceylon may be considered to stand next in rank to those of Banca if they be not indeed in this respect equal to them. Neither, however, the mines of this metal nor those of copper, lead or gold have in Siam experienced the benefit of the industry and enterprize of the Chinese, and the produce therefore is comparatively of small importance. The tin and gold mines are wrought by the Siamese, those of copper and lead by some of the mountain tribes who deliver them as tribute. The quantity of tin which finds its way to the capital, and is from thence exported, amounts to 8,000 piculs or about 500 tons.

13. Although the alluvial tract of the Me-nam and other spots be highly cultivated, yet from all I could learn the far greater por-

tion of the country is covered with primeval forests. The most valuable productions of these are teak wood, rose wood, eagle wood and sapan wood. The teak is of the same quality with that of Ava, and found indeed nearly in the same forests. It is floated down to the capital of Siam often to a distance of 300 miles. Little of this is exported by foreigners. The Siamese themselves construct their large junks of it, and four or five of these are always to be seen on the stocks at the capital. A close grained wood of a red colour, somewhat resembling mahogany, and called by the Portuguese "pão rosa" or rose wood, is produced in abundance in the forests of Siam. This wood which is fit for furniture and ornamental purposes is exported in very large quantities by the Chinese, particularly to Canton and the island of Hai-nan.

14. The most valuable produce of these forests, however, is probably the dye wood called Sapan. There is no part of the world that gives this production in such cheapness or abundance. It forms the dunnage of all the Chinese junks, and the principal part of the cargoes of many of them. The precious perfume called agila or eagle is obtained in the islands on the East Coast of the Gulf of Siam and some of the mountains in the continent. This commodity, which is in great demand in all the Western countries of Asia, is believed

to be the exclusive production of Siam and Cochin China.

15. The staple productions of culture are rice, sugar, pepper and tobacco. The great rice country is of course the tract subjected to the inundations of the Me-nam. This portion of the country is of remarkable fertility and yields rice with a comparatively small portion of labour, so that there is no place where in ordinary years grain can be had at a cheaper rate than in Siam.

16. Sugar was first produced in Siam from the cane about 13 years ago, when the Chinese, in consequence of some additional privileges conferred upon them by the Court, entered upon the cultivation of the cane. In a very few years therefore the commodity began to be exported and such has been the rapidity of the growth of this branch of industry that it is reckoned that at present not less than 80,000 piculs are annually exported.

17. Pepper is another article the culture of which is in the hands of the Chinese. The East Coast of the Gulf about the latitude of 11° and 12° are the countries in which this branch of agriculture is successfully carried on. The quantity of this article which is exported, and almost entirely to China, is about 60,000 piculs, which is four times the quantity produced upon Prince of Wales's Island, and

equal to the whole production of the West Coast of Sumatra, heretofore considered to afford the great bulk of all the pepper of commerce. The Siamese Minister informed me himself that upwards of 40,000 piculs were annually given in as tribute to the King. The branch of revenue arising from this monopoly is realized nearly on the same principles as the forced deliveries of the Dutch in this same production, in coffee and in other articles.

18. I have enumerated the article of tobacco merely to show by its example that a favourable and extraordinary start has of late years taken place in the industry of the country. Twenty years ago this commodity was chiefly imported from Java, but at present the Siamese, who are great consumers of this drug, produce not only enough for their own consumption, but export a considerable quantity to Kamboja and to Cochin China.

19. The same portion of the country which produces pepper, produces also large quantities of gum gamboge and cardamoms, the latter of a fine quality and in great esteem amongst the Chinese. Benjamin is produced chiefly in the kingdom of Lao and has of late years been exported in considerable quantities. This is a commodity which has commonly been supposed to be peculiar to the Islands of Sumatra and Borneo.

20. Of animal products a remarkable variety applicable to the purposes of commerce is afforded by Siam. The Chinese deal extensively in almost all of them. These consist of hides, peltry, horns, bones, ivory, feathers, salt fish, stick lac and esculent birds nests.

21. The hides consist principally of deer skins, of which the Dutch used in former times to take from Siam to Japan about 150,000 a year, with buffalo or elephant's and rhinoceros' hides. The peltry consists of tiger, leopard, otter and cat skins. Besides the horns exported for economical uses, rhinoceros horns and deers antlers in a peculiar stage of their formation are exported by the Chinese for their supposed medicinal virtues. Of bones, an immense quantity is carried to China, a few of them for medicinal purposes, but by far the greater quantity to be ground down and used as a dressing for the highly cultivated but exhausted soils of some of the most populous districts of China.

22. Stick lac of the finest quality which is any where to be found forms a very valuable product. It is chiefly obtained from Lao and the northern parts of the country. Of this production not less than 18,000 piculs are annually sent to China.

23. One valuable article remains still to be mentioned ; culinary salt, which is produced

in a degree of excellence and cheapness which is nowhere exceeded. This commodity is manufactured in the districts lying upon the central and western extremes of the Me-nam. The whole is obtained by solar evaporation, and the peculiar fitness of the soil and climate for the manufacture is sufficiently indicated not only by the cheapness of the salt, but by the size and purity of its crystal. This commodity is brought to the capital and easily distributed over the most populous parts of the country by means of the innumerable canals or small rivers which intersect the tract of inundation. The traffic in it indeed constitutes the largest branch of native commerce.

24. After this brief sketch of the productions of Siam, I shall offer a still shorter one of the foreign wares and products which the Siamese take in exchange for them. These consist generally of the manufactures of China. From the Chinese the Siamese receive manufactured silks, common earthen ware in large quantity, with a little fine porcelain, tea, paper, toys and certain articles of wearing apparel.

25. From Western India they receive opium, cotton piece goods and a small quantity of embroidered silks. Of opium, from the best information I could obtain, the annual consumption seems to be about 200 chests.

The whole of this is the product of our Bengal Provinces, and indeed I believe that no other description of opium has ever been tried in the Siamese market. Notwithstanding the enhanced price the consumption has been increasing from year to year with the increasing foreign commerce of the country. The current price previous to the late extraordinary rise was 5,000 ticals a chest. Allowing this price for the quantity consumed, it appears that the Siamese pay a million of ticals a year for our opium or about a milion and a quarter of Calcutta rupees.

26. The cotton piece goods of India, especially the chintzes of Surat and the Coromandel Coast, appear from time immemorial to have been articles of considerable demand. About the capital especially a very large proportion is clothed with these articles. I have been informed that the annual quantity either imported direct by European vessels, brought by junks from Batavia and the Straits of Malacca, or across the Peninsula, does not fall short of five hundred bales.

27. Of European manufactures those most in demand among the Siamese are white cotton goods, cheap woollens, fire arms and glass ware. The taste for this class of commodities appeared to me to be so general amongst the Siamese that nothing seemed wanting to give

the branch of trade connected with it value and stability but a moderate share of freedom and security.

28. It would be satisfactory to me to be enabled to lay before Government a detailed estimate of the import and export trade of Siam, and while I was upon the spot I spared no pains to obtain materials for it. With respect to the principal articles my enquiries were not unattended with success, but from the character of the Government and the nature of my own situation it was impossible to procure any statement approaching to completeness or accuracy.

Instead therefore, of submitting to Government such imperfect materials as I obtained I shall prefer the plan of giving an account of the number, tonnage and character of the shipping engaged in the foreign trade of Siam. Such a sketch I hope will afford the best data for estimating the commercial capacities of the country and the real amount of its foreign trade, which upon the whole appears to me to exceed that of any country in India, not under the protection of an European Government, with the exception of China. Nearly the whole of this trade centres in the river Me-nam and the port of Bangkok. Chantabun, the most considerable port on the eastern shore of the Gulf, is nearly shut against foreign trade, and

that which is carried on at the ports of Ligor and Sungora on the Western Coast, is not very considerable.

29. The foreign trade of Siam is conducted with China, Cochin China and Kamboja, certain native ports of the Indian Islands, Batavia, the European ports in the Straits of Malacca, British India and America.

30. Of all these the trade with China is incomparably of the greatest value and amount. This is conducted with almost every port of that great country, being by no means confined, like the trade of Europeans, to one part of that empire, or two at the most. The trade with the Province of Canton, including the Island of Hoinan and Fokien is the most considerable, but there is also a trade carried on with the more Northern provinces of Chi-Kiang and King-nan.

31. The greater number of the junks engaged in this trade are constructed in the river of Siam, where from 8 to 10 are annually built. Their size usually depends upon the nature of the Chinese port with which they are connected, the bulkiness or otherwise of the article suited to each particular market, and other considerations. It varies from 1,600 piculs or 100 tons up to 15,000 piculs or near 1,000 tons. Of the latter description are two

junks belonging to the King of Siam, which proceed annually to Canton, and under pretext of an Embassy are loaded with merchandize exempt from duties. Of the larger description generally from 18 to 21 junks belong to the King of Siam himself or the Princes and other persons about his Court. All these vessels, with very trifling exceptions, are commanded and navigated by Chinese.

32. The trade of Cochin China and Kamboja is chiefly conducted with the ports of Saigon and Kangkao, and compared to the latter is very inconsiderable indeed in point of amount. These junks are also exclusively navigated by Chinese mariners. The main exports from Siam are iron and the imports raw silk.

33. Palembang in Sumatra and some of the ports on the north and west coasts of Borneo, the Island of Celebes and the Straits of Malacca are the places in the Indian Archipelago which have a commercial intercourse with Siam. The imports in this intercourse are gold and certain descriptions of native cloth, and the exports, iron, salt and oil.

With Batavia the trade is carried on in Chinese junks of about 7,500 piculs burthen, and with Singapore, Malacca and Penang in the same description of vessels, seldom averag-

ing beyond 5,000 piculs.

34. The trade with British India is conducted principally from Surat and Bombay, and occasionally from Bengal. During the long war with France, when every other branch of this trade ceased, the Surat ships, generally from two to three annually, continued to frequent the port of Bangkok. The supercargoes of these vessels have generally been Parsees or Mohamedans. They have commonly imported gold and silver, silk tissues, and printed cloths, the manufacture of Western India, and have carried away gamboge, eagle wood, sapan wood and, of late years, sugar.

35. The American trade began in 1818 with one ship. In 1819 there came three ships and 1821 four ships. In 1822 there was but one ship, the appearance of which was accidental, and she carried away but a small portion of a cargo. The Americans have indeed of late years in a great measure retired from the Indian trade in general; but, I have no doubt, have abandoned that of Siam in particular from the vexatious restraints to which they have found themselves exposed.

36. The following sketch will exhibit a general view of the whole of the foreign trade of Siam.

	Piculs.
To the Port of Canton—8 junks averaging 10,875 piculs . . .	87,000
To the Ports of Hai-nan 40 small junks averaging 2,800 piculs .	112,000
To the Ports of Fo-kien, Che-Kiang and Kiang-nan 32 junks ave- raging 9,500 piculs ea. . . .	304,000
To Batavia 3 junks of 7,500 piculs ea.	22,500
To Malacca and Penang 5 junks averaging 5,000 piculs ea. .	25,000
To Singapore 27 small junks ave- raging to 15,000 piculs each .	40,500
To China from Ligor 2 junks at 6,500	13,000
From Chantibun to China . . .	604,000
1 junk of	4,000
From Bang Kok to Saigun in Cochin China 18 junks averaging 850 piculs each	15,300
Piculs . . .	<hr/> 623,300

37. Allowing 16 piculs to each ton, it appears by this statement that the native trade of Siam conducted exclusively by the Chinese, will amount to near 39,000 tons, and that supposing the Chinese vessels require, as is probable, three times the number of mariners that an European vessel does, that this trade gives employment to above 8,000 hands.

38. If to this Chinese trade be added 800 tons annually for the American trade, and 1,000 for that of British India, and we conjecture that the Native Malayan trade also amounts to about this last sum, then we shall have an aggregate for the whole trade of 41,800 tons.

39. The Government of Siam, of which I am next to give a sketch, is as complete an example of despotic power vested in one man as can well be imagined. Its influence pervades the whole frame of society, and the effects of its mischievous interference are everywhere discoverable. The King is not only the head of the State, but also of the church. There is no hereditary nobility nor hereditary priesthood, nor indeed any other check whatever to his arbitrary will. The superstition of his subjects has clothed his person with supernatural attributes. Matters relating to himself or to his Government are spoken of by them only mysteriously or in whispers. Thus his name is, for example, never mentioned, and it is pretended is unknown, except to a few favourite courtiers.

40. The administration of the Siamese Government is complex, but more formal and regular in detail than might be expected. There are nine grades of official nobility or titled persons descending from the Governors of provinces in regular gradation to the lowest officer of the Government.

41. All the male population of Siam are by law considered the slaves or servants of the State, and compelled to give it their gratuitous labour in whatever form it may be exacted from the age of 21 upwards for four months in each year or in other words for one third of their future existence. The persons exempted from this oppressive law are the whole officers of Government, the priesthood slaves, and amongst strangers, the whole Chinese population, but they only, for the Burmans, the Peguans, the Kambojans and even the descendants of the Portuguese Christians, are subject to this servitude. For those who are liable to it an exemption can only be purchased by a heavy pecuniary commutation.

The system by which the population is organized and arranged for the purpose of rendering the forced services of the people available, forms the most important object of Siamese administration. To effect this the whole body of the people is divided into two equal parts designated the *right* and *left* hand sides. The two chief Ministers of Government preside respectively over these and the inferior officers commonly take their titles, such as centurion, decurion, &c., from the number of the divisions or sub divisions over which they exercise authority.

43. The two great executive officers of

the Siamese Government are known in the language of the country by the names of the *Kalahom* and *Chakri*. The *first* is Chief of the judicial and military branches of the administration, supposed, under this despotic government, to have a natural relation to each other, and more especially superintends the Government of the Southern provinces of the empire. The *second* superintends the fiscal department of the administration and is vested at the same time with the peculiar charge of the northern provinces.

44. Under the *Kalahom* or chief of the right hand, are the principal judge and the judge of the palace, and under the *Chakri* or chief of the left hand, the superintendent of the land revenue and the *Prah-Klang*. This last has charge of all matters connected with trade and the royal monopolies, and as the Siamese Government recognizes no foreign relation but what is connected with trade, he is also by implication, the Minister of the affairs of Strangers. The Portuguese corruptly write his name *Berkalong*. Its meaning in the Siamese language as I have written it is, Lord or Chief of the Magazines or Warehouses, and it is expressive of the nature of his functions.

45. Such was the Siamese Government from early times down to the reign of His Present Majesty, who although he has permitted

the mere form to exist has made great innovations upon it. The two chief executive officers of the Siamese Government are no longer of any consequence, for under the title of *Krom* or Superior Lord, the King has appointed four individuals of high rank, his own immediate relations, to superintend and direct the different branches of the administration, placing the ancient officers under their authority. The first of these has jurisdiction over the palace and is the counsellor and personal adviser of the Sovereign. The second superintends the whole judicial administration of the Kingdom: the third the military administration and the fourth trade and the royal monopolies. Of the two latter the first superintends the general affairs of the western and southern provinces, and the last of the eastern or those assigned for the forced culture and delivery of pepper, cardamom and other articles of agricultural produce. The person holding the last office at present is *Krom Chiat*, the eldest and illegitimate son of the King, and the *Prah Klang*, with whom it was that we negotiated, is his deputy, as well as his confidential agent.

46. This outline of the Siamese Government may be filled up by a brief review of the administration of justice, of the military force, of the revenue, and of the state of religion.

47. The administration of justice is more solemn and methodical than might be expected among such a people. There exist distinct courts for the administration of Civil and Criminal law. Among the Governors of Provinces the hereditary and military princes alone have the power of life and death. No capital execution can take place elsewhere without a warrant of the Court, and in all cases there is an appeal to the chief judge. All evidence is taken upon oath and the law proceedings which are operose and tedious are invariably committed to writing. The Siamese laws themselves exist in the form of a written code.

[an omission
occurs here.]

48. Fines and stripes constitute the chief punishments in Siam for all offences and the latter can be very generally * Corporal punishment however is so very frequent among all classes that the infliction of it is hardly considered as an affront.

49. Upon the whole, I believe that the administration of the laws at Siam under His present Majesty is not ferocious or vindictive, but rather of a mild character. No capital punishment took place during the four months we were at the place, and for the two years before it, there had been but three, and these for very heinous offenses.

50. The military force is taken with little selection from the general levy of the

people which I have already described. The Siamese are evidently of a timid and cowardly character, and have no military virtues, except perhaps their ready submission to authority and the capacity of their physical frames to support privation and fatigue. The organization and discipline of their armies is purely native and, unlike the people of Western Asia, or their neighbours the Cochin Chinese, they have learned nothing from Europeans except a rude acquaintance of fire arms. The few troops we saw about the capital were clothed in an uniform dress and armed with muskets. It is probable that they were a selection, but notwithstanding, they were extremely wretched. The principal part of the army is always upon the Burman frontier, and this I am told amounts usually to not less 30,000 men. The Siamese have no apprehension of invasion from any other quarter and the consequence is that the capital is almost defenceless. Fire arms as they are purchased are constantly sent to the northern frontier, and no cannon is mounted upon the walls of the palace. I enquired the cause of this last circumstance of one of the naturalized Mahomedans, who informed me that it was a precaution taken from apprehension of treachery, a fact which points directly at the extreme weakness of the Government.

51. The revenues of the Siamese Government are derived from the Corvees or

forced services, from a land tax, from certain excise duties, from Custom House duties, from monopolies, and from a capitation tax upon one class of its population.

52. The forced services, although not in proportion productive to the State, are of all others the heaviest tax upon the people. The most mischievous ingenuity, indeed, could hardly devise a scheme more destructive of industrious habits and adverse to public prosperity than a system which devotes, as this virtually does, to the arbitrary, prodigal and capricious will of the servants of Government, one third portion of the manhood of almost all its subjects. There was a period in the history of the Siamese when matters were still worse, for I find on reference to all the European writers of the 17th Century, that by the ancient constitution of the Kingdom the period of the forced services was in their times 6, instead of 4 months in the year, as at present. The favourable change which reduced it to the latter took place in the commencement of the reign of the late King or about 30 years ago, and with the exception of the influx of Chinese and the privileges conferred upon them, seems the only material change which has taken place in the condition of Siamese society during the period of the three centuries that Europeans have been acquainted with it. The whole male population of Siam, supposed to be

liable to the military and other forced services, is considered to amount to six hundred thousand. The annual labour of an adult is considered worth eighty-four piculs of rice or 126 ticals (Rs. 157).

53. The land tax is small and unproductive in proportion as the personal services are heavy and disturb or destroy the industrious habits of the people, and their natural devotion to rural occupation.

54. The proprietary right of land redeemed from a state of nature and under culture is considered to be vested in the Sovereign. Uncultivated land is too extensive in proportion to the population to be claimed by any one. The value seems to be stated by the State not upon the land but upon the people or their labour. This is obvious in its rude and barbarous appropriation at one period of Siamese history of a half and now of a third of the whole male labour of the country. It is for the same reason and not from any feelings of political jealousy, as some have supposed, that the Siamese Government interdicts its population from emigration. The loss of every individual appears to the Government a loss of palpable and available revenue, and it calculates upon the loss of a subject nearly in the same way as the proprietor of slaves would on the elopement of a slave.

This principle, I have no doubt, is the source of the similar laws on the same subject which exist in China and Cochin China, however they may be explained by strangers or by natives.

55. Although the soil be considered the property of the Sovereign, dwelling houses and other buildings with fruit trees are held to be private property, and may be bought or sold, or transmitted as inheritance.

56. The land tax is levied in kind, and the principle on which it is imposed is, I think, among Asiatic Governments peculiar. It is not a tax proportioned to the rent or proportioned to the produce, but a tax upon the superficies without regard to the quality of the land, provided it be cultivated. Nothing but its extreme moderation could render a tax of this sort tolerable. Upon a Siamese measure called a sen, consisting of 20 fathoms to a side, there is levied a yearly tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ measures of rice in the husk. The result of this by calculation, is that an acre of cultivated land pays 630 lbs. of clean rice, worth on an average of several years 3s. $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cent.

57. Besides the tax paid in kind on the principle now mentioned, there is universally paid a tax on certain fruit trees and other productions of the soil, which is one of the principal sources of the revenue. The amount of this varies with the nature of the tree or

product. The Durian, a fruit highly esteemed by the Siamese, pays 1 tical for each tree, while the mango pays no more than an eighth part of this amount. Among the products thus taxed are the tobacco and the sugar cane, the first paying $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a tical for each hundred plants, and the last a quarter of a tical for each bed.

58. The excise duties, if I may give them this name, consist of a tax on spirits, which is very productive, although the use of spirituous liquor be contrary both to law and religion ; a tax on gambling ; on shops ; on fisheries and the slaughter of animals, altho' this last be most rigidly forbidden by the theory of the religion and law of the country. All of these are farmed and it was not difficult therefore to ascertain their amounts.

59. The passion for spirituous liquors among the Siamese seems to prevail in proportion as it is interdicted to them by religious duties. In proof of this the public farm sells in the town of Bangkok alone for 102,000 ticals or 127,400 Rupees.

60. The tax on gambling is an universal source of revenue throughout the country. The Siamese are addicted to gambling, and the Chinese still more. The amount of this tax is commonly considered equal to that of the tax on spirits.

61. A specific duty is levied on all shops, including the floating houses and the numerous boats upon the river, which are used as shops. This tax is rated according to the nature of the trade which the owner of the shop conducts.

62. The tax on fisheries I think is levied only on the Me-nam. The slaughter of the animals is confined to that of hogs. There is no point of their religion in which the Siamese are so rigid as that which interdicts taking animal life, but the great increase in the number of Chinese seems to have driven them in some measure even from this point. Great quantities of poultry are therefore daily exposed for sale, and 200 hogs are daily slaughtered in the market of Bangkok, the flesh of which is publicly hawked about in the streets and on the Me-nam.

63. The Custom House duties consist of imposts upon goods imported and exported, and duties upon tonnage or measurement. The imposts upon goods often purport to be an *ad valorem* duty but rudely assessed. Upon the import cargo of European vessels it is levied as a percentage upon the whole value, as appraised by the officers of Government. With respect to the tonnage or measurement duty it varies with the place or nation with which the trade is conducted. The direct trade with the continent of China and which is

really carried on by the native shipping of the port of Bangkok, is on that account free from all impost whether on goods or tonnage. The junks trading with Hai-nan, and which actually belong to the ports of that Island, pay a measurement duty at a certain fixed rate per fathom of the breadth of the beam, and European vessels twice as much. The amount of the revenue derived from the Customs it was found impracticable to obtain.

64. The Capitulation tax is confined to the Chinese and upon these is levied only upon the adult male population which includes men from 20 and upwards. In the city and province of Bangkok the number of persons paying the tax is 31,000, and it is thought that in all Siam there is much evasion. The amount for each individual is 2 ticals annually, with a small commission to the Collector. Every Chinese who pays receives a receipt and a badge which he wears upon his wrist, and which, if he is seen without, he is liable to be seized and made to pay again.

65. The monopolies exercised by the Siamese Government constitute, it is probable, the most extensive source of its revenue. These monopolies, to its credit, do not extend to any of the great articles constituting the necessities of life, such as grain, salt or oil, but principally embrace such commodities as

are demanded in foreign markets of articles of luxury. In the greater number of them also the monopoly is not very rigid and after specified quantities of some others are delivered, the trade is left free. The following are the principal commodities subject to monopoly, pepper, cardamoms, gamboge, sapan wood, eagle wood and benjamin, ivory, tin, esculent nests and turtles eggs.

66. A few of these articles are delivered as revenue but more generally the King, in the manner practised by the Dutch and formerly by ourselves, affects to pay for the commodity, actually however, as may be supposed, giving greatly less than its intrinsic value. Thus for example he pays at Chantabun 10 ticals for pepper which is worth 20 at Bangkok. I may here observe, however, that the production of this article in particular, being in the hands of the Chinese, the Government is compelled to give a more liberal price than usual and in 1821 it was compelled to raise it by no less than 2 ticals. The operation of this principle has of course been favourable even to the Government itself and is sufficient with the favourable character of the soil and climate to account for the great production of this commodity, which I have already alluded to. For transporting the produce of these monopolies to the capital very large establishments are constantly kept up.

67. After this summary of the articles composing the royal revenues I shall attempt to estimate as far as practicable the amount of them, with a view of conveying some notion of the resources of the kingdom.

Land Tax	258,000
Spirit Farm	264,000
Gambling Farm	260,000
Farms of Shop Tax	165,000
Fisheries of the Me-nam	64,000
Capitulation of the Chinese	200,000
Monopoly of esculent nests	100,000
Profits on Monopoly of Sapan Wood at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per picul upon 150,000 piculs	225,000
Profits on monopoly of tin at 15 ticals upon 4,000 piculs	60,000
Profits on Monopoly of Pepper on 40,000 piculs	320,000
Profits on Monopoly of minor arti- cles as Eagle Wood, Carda- moms, Lead, Ivory, and gam- boge	110,000
Custom House duties with profits upon commercial operations un- connected with the Monopolies conjectured at	200,000
Total Ticals	<u>2,226,000</u>

68. By this rough statement the revenue of the Siamese Government will amount, when reduced to rupees, to two millions seven hundred and eighty-two thousand five hundred, and will appear to afford resources of no small moment for such a state of society.

69. The expenses of the Government are from its character and nature by no means in proportion. The universal conscription saves if not the whole at least a great share of the expense of maintaining the army, as well as every description of public establishment. The value of this to the Government upon an estimate of the value of labour throughout the country cannot be much less than 7,344,000 ticals or 9,180,000 rupees a year.

70. The servants of the state of all ranks, with a few exceptions, instead of receiving regular salaries, are left in a measure to prey upon the people. The fixed mode of remuneration is a tithe upon the collection, and all the officers of Government are entitled to the gratuitous services of a stated number of the common conscription. The pernicious influence of this system is so extensive at the capital that there exists no such thing as free labor, for the labor of every individual is appropriated by some Chief or other, without whose approval he cannot work, and when he serves with it, he must pay a fine or share of

his wages for this privilege. This extends not only to the ordinary peasantry, but to artificers of every description. Notwithstanding this apparent economy there is I have been told seldom above 160,000 ticals or 200,000 rupees in the Royal treasury. The capricious and ostentatious expense of the Court itself, and the frequent largess given to the priests are the great sources of expenditure.

71. The institutions connected with religion have an extraordinary influence upon the character of the Government and of the people. There is no country, it appears to me, in which religion forms so much the business of life as in Siam. It is said that there are five thousand priests at the capital, and not less than 50,000 throughout the kingdom. It is a peculiarity of the Buddhist religion, as it is established in Siam, that every man from the King downwards must, once in his life, be ordained to the priesthood and pass a certain time in the exercise of its functions. These priests live in monasteries, are condemned to celibacy, and forbid to labor. These monasteries, which are by far the most splendid buildings in the kingdom, are not endowed with lands or any fixed revenue. The priests are fed and clothed from the casual and voluntary charity of the people, but such is the devotion of the Siamese, that this proves an ample fund. The priests therefore, live in a degree of comfort which is

unknown among the people. Throughout the whole of their immense body a system of rigid subordination and discipline is observed from the high priest down to the neophyte. The Government names all the priesthood, contributes in a great degree to their support, and being in this state of dependence, and destitute of hereditary privileges or property, the effect of their institution is to enhance the arbitrary power of the Government, and I make little question but that it is mainly contributive to the formation of that exquisite and unparalleled system of despotism which prevails in Siam.

72. The spirit of their religious institutions is not only diffused over the whole body of the native population, but extends also to strangers residing in Siam. The Chinese especially, whatever be their religious creed, profess themselves Buddhists as soon as they come into the country, intermarry with the Siamese, give alms to the priests, frequent the temples, occasionally become priests themselves, and sacrificing the practice of burying their dead and erecting costly monuments over them, upon which in other countries prescribed by the Buddhist faith even the wonted bigotry of the Mohammedans is compelled in some measure to give way; they often intermarry with the Siamese, salute the priests of Buddha as they pass them, and pay their court to the

Siamese Chiefs and Government by making frequent offerings to the priests and temples.

73. On the character which is formed by these institutions, civil and religious, I shall offer a few words. The disposition of the Government seems nearly to level all distinctions except those of its own temporary creation. The lower orders are on a level, and no symptom is discoverable of the institution of the castes which forms so characteristic a feature of the state of society in Hindostan. Independent of the distinction of nations and tribes the only other distinction is that of freemen and slaves. The latter class according to the information I have received is numerous. Slaves being by law exempted from the forced services derive from this circumstance a peculiar value. They are not treated with inhumanity. The master may punish them by imprisonment or moderate corporal infliction, but no person independent of the laws, is vested with the power of life and death over them. An extraordinary advance in latter times in the price of slaves would seem to imply an important change in the frame of society. About 50 ticals was in former periods the price of a good slave, but at present the average is about three times this amount. This implies an increased demand for labour, which has no doubt been the result of that freedom from internal disorder and anarchy, and the augmentation of commerce

and industry, which have now prevailed for 40 years, since the final expulsion of the Burmans.

74. The absence of free labour makes it a matter of some difficulty to ascertain its actual price in Siam. The effect of the conscription is of course equivalent to that of a heavy tax upon it. At the capital the price of common day labour is as high as a salüng and a half or $7\frac{1}{2}$ annas, and carpenters work is paid at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ a tical or 10 annas a day, which rates are at least double those of Calcutta. The nominal wages of a common day labourer at the ordinary price of the highest quality of grain, were he to labour 28 days in the month, would purchase mere grain equal to the consumption of 18 individuals. From the nature of the forced services, however, it is evident that he cannot be expected to perform productive labour for above two-thirds of this time, and that his wages are capable only of affording food for twelve individuals instead of eighteen, from which again a great reduction must necessarily be made for the frequent holidays enjoined by the Buddhist religion. Still I imagine the wages of labour to be amply paid in Siam, for the habitations of the Siamese peasantry are economical, in their diet they are abstemious, the necessaries of life, consisting of salt, spices and dried fish, remarkably cheap, and their climate is such as to render a

very small portion of clothing, their dearest article of expenditure, sufficient.

75. The great quantity of fertile and appropriated land which exists, while it occasions a constant demand for labour, no doubt contributes, along with the tax on labour itself in the shape of forced services, to raise wages, while it prevents the price of provisions from advancing.

76. Mendicity is not frequent in Siam, and what exists seems to arise out of the religious institutions of the country. The expensive alms bestowed upon the priests do not deserve to come under this name. They are a voluntary tax paid by the nation towards the support of its religious institutions. The superfluity of alms given to the priests, however, is indeed a source of mendicity in the laity, and with the precepts of the Buddhist religion, which enjoins giving charity among all classes, is the principal cause of beggary. Beggars are very seldom seen in the streets or public places on common occasions, but on holidays when the temples are open, hundreds of them may be observed in these edifices while the priests and the devout among the laity may be seen ostentatiously distributing alms among them.

77. The age of marriage with both sexes seems to be protracted among the Siamese to a

period unusually late for an Oriental people. The matter amongst them seems to be regulated as in most European countries, by the capacity of the parties to form a permanent settlement. Persons of rank sometimes marry sooner, but it is seldom that matrimonial connections are formed earlier than 21 for the men and 18 for the women. The conscription and the waste of life and labor by the priesthood, to which the people naturally fly to avoid conscription, seem to be the principal causes of these protracted marriages.

78. From the evidence now adduced I think it probable that [the] population is not retrograde or stationary at Siam, but on the contrary, progressive, and that it is likely to continue increasing even under its present bad form of Government, as long as tranquillity can be maintained.

79. In the year 1820 this increase received a serious, though I believe only a temporary check, through the ravages of the Cholera Morbus. This disorder was traced from Penang and Queda across the Peninsula to Sangora, along the western [shore] of the Gulf [to] the villages at the mouth of the Menam, from thence to the capital, from which it spread in one direction along the banks of the river until it reached the kingdom of Laos and in another along the head of the Gulf until

it found its way to Kamboja and finally to Cochin China. Its depredations at the capital lasted no more then 15 days, but in that short period, appear from all accounts to have been frightful. The Siamese Minister informed me that by an investigation instituted by order of His Majesty, it was found that 1/5th or as he expressed himself 2 in 10 of the Siamese population of the Town of Bangkok had been swept off by this malady.

80. With reference to the character of the Siamese in their domestic relations, I shall only advert to the condition of the female sex. The call of the Government for the service of the men necessarily throws an unusual share of toil upon the women. They are constantly to be seen occupied in such descriptions of labour as are the exclusive province of the male sex in other countries. They are for example employed in the heaviest field labour, and on the Menam are more frequently seen than the men rowing and navigating the different descriptions of craft, either employed in fishing or in traffic. Little concealment or seclusion is observed with respect to women of any rank. They go abroad unveiled and openly, but this apparent indulgence arises obviously more from the men holding them cheaply than from any confidence which they repose in them.

81. By the successful despotism of the Siamese Government the people have been totally disarmed, and from this cause seems to result much of the servility, supineness, and thorough submission which mark the Siamese character, qualities which yet have contributed perhaps for so many ages to preserve the unity and national independence of the country, notwithstanding their degrading operation in the moral character of the people.

82. The natural effect of such institutions as those of the Siamese upon their character is to render them uncandid, and pusillanimous. Of persons about the Court we found rapacity and dissimulation to be the strongest characteristic. We had reason indeed to believe, from all we heard, that the lower orders in the provinces had a far more favourable character, but those of the capital with whom we had intercourse were certainly tainted with the vices of their superiors.

83. The extravagant national vanity of all classes, down even to the slave or peasant, is a part of their character not so easily accounted for, unless it may be explained by their having been surrounded for ages by conquered or tributary states, and their practical ignorance of all national superiority. This singular vanity appears to have been an attribute of the Siamese character in all ages, and never

fails to have been remarked by every European writer who has treated of it. Although this temper never breaks out into opprobrious or insulting language or conduct, yet, to say the least of it, it leads them to underrate all strangers, and the consequence of this, in our own intercourse, was, to say the least of it, exceedingly inconvenient. Although capable of performing the most degrading or servile offices towards their superiors, yet no reasonable reward would induce them to perform any menial office for us, and even on the day on which we were presented at Court, it was with considerable difficulty and not without much hesitation that bearers would be allowed to carry our Palanquins.

84. Considering the timid and even cowardly character which the enervating nature of their political institutions has produced, it may seem at first sight unaccountable to have conquered and long maintained their superiority over the small but braver tribes by whom they are surrounded. This circumstance however seems to me to resolve itself into the simple fact of superiority of civilization, which implies in a word superiority of resources in wealth and population, with possession of subordination to authority, and thence the capacity to a certain extent at least of acting in concord upon concerted and systematic views.

85. The character of the Siamese in the conduct of their wars appears in a very unfavourable light, but if it be any palliation, it may be asserted that it is no worse than that of their neighbours, the Burmans. The frontier between them is reduced to desert. They never come to an open and decisive contest and their hostilities, even at the highest, seldom amount to more than a petty warfare of posts. One great object seems to be the making of prisoners, and in carrying this into effect, they are far from confining themselves to persons under arms, but equally carry off the peasantry of the open country of both sexes. Their common practice is to put the leaders to death, and to consign the meaner captives to hard labour for life in chains. At the Siamese capital we daily saw great numbers of these unfortunate persons employed in sowing, ditching and other severe labour.

86. I have next to offer a few words on the political relations of the Siamese. Of these their relations with the Burmans, Cochin Chinese and Chinese only are of any consideration and their connection with our own Indian empire is next in importance.

87. With the Burmans the Siamese carry on an interminable war. There are, I believe, now and then, moments of truce, but the armies on both sides are always on the frontier and a

solid peace seems to be impossible among barbarians who view each other with so implacable a hatred. In our intercourse with the Siamese we found that even to mention the name of the Burmans was considered a kind of incivility and whenever they allude to them they talk of them as a faithless and treacherous race with whom no terms ought to be kept. Their possession of a common religion and in general of common laws and customs, seems to have no effect in abating this animus.

88. An uninterrupted course of embassies subsists between the Cochin Chinese and the Siamese, yet they are mutually jealous of each other. The dismemberment of the Kingdom of Kamboja is the principal subject of contention. Each party has seized a portion of this country, and this having brought them into immediate contact with each other * for dispute or contention between them. Their territories population and resources are probably nearly equal, but the military strength of the Cochin Chinese, with the aid of European discipline, is infinitely better organized, and is, as well as the national character, more fit for aggression and enterprize than that of the Siamese. If these two nations should quarrel, although neither be suited to maintain a permanent dominion over the other, yet an ambitious Cochin Chinese Prince would find no difficulty in seizing the Siamese portion of Kamboja, of

[an omission
apparently
occurs here.]

making formidable inroads into the Siamese territory and especially of destroying or sacking the capital, which, defenceless as it is, would fall an easy prey to any sudden incursion.

89. Some attempt at a coalition between the Cochin Chinese and Burmans, a people between whom there seems never before to have existed any diplomatic or other intercourse, has been made within the [?last] two or three years. In the year 1821 an envoy was sent from Cochin China to Ava, and by recent accounts it is understood that a Mission has been sent in return from the Burmans. When I was at Sai-gun, from which the Cochin Chinese Envoy sailed, I endeavoured, but ineffectually, to obtain a correct account of the object of his Mission. I could only learn that his conduct was in general disapproved of, and that when he returned he would be in considerable risk of losing his head. It would appear that when he arrived at Ava, he was then received as a suspicious person and that doubts were entertained of his coming direct from the Court of Cochin China, upon which he was imprisoned. The long detention occasioned by this circumstance was received by the Cochin Chinese as a crime, which they were preparing to punish in the manner I have described.

90. The connection of the Siamese with the Chinese nation, although ostensibly politi-

cal, is in fact purely of a commercial nature. The territories, indeed, border upon each other, but remote and thinly inhabited parts of both. These are the kingdom of Lao on the one side, and the Chinese province of Yunnan on the other. Here some traffic is carried on between them, and a considerable number of the Chinese of Yunnan have settled at Lanchang, the capital of Lao, and other towns of the country. But the great intercourse is generally maritime and such as I have already described. The King of Siam, although the circumstance be not generally known, acknowledged himself a tributary of the Emperor of China. His doing so does not arise from any political necessity or consideration, or out of any actual dependence of Siam upon China, but altogether from this mercenary motive, that the vessels which carry the ambassadors may, under pretext of their doing so, be exempted from the payment of all imposts. With this view two of the largest description of junks, amounting to nearly 1,000 tons each, sail annually from Bangkok to Canton loaded with merchandize. They carry ambassadors annually to the Vice Roy of Canton and once in three years, these ambassadors go to Peking, an honor, however, of which they are not considered worthy until they receive a title of Chinese nobility from the Vice Roy and assume the costume of the Chinese. They carry the Chinese Emperor a golden flower in token of tribute, but receive

in return gifts to a far greater value. The vanity of one Court and the rapacity of the other have long rendered this intercourse a permanent one.

91. The relations which subsist between Siam and European nations are purely commercial, with the exception of the late political connection with our own, which has resulted from their recent prosperity and our accidental possession of Prince of Wales Island. In my dispatch respecting the affairs of Queda, I have explained at considerable length the nature, character, and consequences of this connection. I may here repeat that the Siamese, notwithstanding their numbers and the extent of their territory, are a people whose power can in no respect be dangerous to us, even at so weak a point as Prince of Wales Island. Their utter want of maritime skill and resources renders them not only incapable of any active and formidable aggression, but deprives them of the means of harassing and distressing their neighbours even by such practical depredations as have rendered many of the tribes of the Indian Islands, of the West Coast of India, and of the Persian and Arabian Gulfs troublesome or even formidable to the peaceable and richer nations in their vicinity. In reference to the immediate relation of the Siamese with ourselves, there is another matter to be taken into consideration. On the Bay of Bengal or Straits

of Malacca, where they come into immediate contact with us, they are nearly destitute of ports or harbours, and the country in general is little better than a wilderness. The strength and population of Siam lie on the banks of the Menam, and between this and the points where they might come into collision with us there intervene mountains, forests and marshes difficult to pass. Under these circumstances, and considering the timid character of the Siamese and their thorough want of discipline, I am firmly and decidedly of opinion that there is no force with which they could invade the opposite territory of Queda, setting altogether aside the more difficult enterprize of invading Penang itself, that could ever be dangerous to us, or which might not readily be repelled by a few companies of sepoy.

92. It is possible, however, that the vanity and ambition of the Siamese, buoyed up by their recent prosperity, may render them, while in possession of Queda, for a time at least although not dangerous yet troublesome neighbours to us. Having never measured their strength with an European enemy, they will inevitably miscalculate it, and their arrogance will be sure to interpret our forbearance into fear and apprehension. This is a contingency which may be looked for, while the requisite measures for meeting it should be anticipated.

93. Should the arrogance of the Siamese embarrass us in the manner I have pointed out as probable, it appears to me that it will unquestionably be the best policy to meet the difficulty at once. The military preparations for this purpose may be made on the most moderate and economical scale. A simultaneous attack by a few companies of sepoys from Penang and the blockade of the Menam by 2 or 3 cruizers of the smallest class, it appears to me, will be adequate to every object. Through the military attack the Siamese would be driven out of Queda, and either the legitimate prince restored, or they themselves compelled to enter into equal and equitable conditions of commerce and friendship with us. The blockade of the Menam will be the easiest, safest and most effectual measure that can well be contemplated. The squadron will be secure in the fine harbour of the Sichang group of Islands of which a survey is in the possession of Government, and nearly from this station it will have in its power to intercept, not only the whole foreign trade of the kingdom, which centres in the Menam and can pass by no other route, but the valuable tributes and forced deliveries which are conveyed to the capital from every part of the Gulf, but especially from its eastern shore. In that foreign commerce and these deliveries not only the Government itself is concerned, but every individual about the Court, and above

all those who conduct the intercourse with strangers have a direct and personal interest, so that it may be reckoned with certainty that a few months continuance of the blockade without inflicting any injury upon the people, would enable us to dictate to the Court of Siam any conditions which it might be considered just or necessary to impose upon it.

94. When a good understanding is once established between us and the Siamese, it appears to me, as I have stated in another place, that advantages both of a commercial and political nature may be gained from their friendship, which never can be expected from that of the Malays. The political connection it may be reckoned will balance the power of the Burmans and check the arrogance of that people which has of late years so often proved troublesome to us, and unless I am misinformed, the latest accounts from Ava prove that the bare knowledge of our Mission to Siam has already had a tendency of this nature.

95. But it is our commercial relations alone with Siam which are most deserving of attention. I am firmly of opinion that there is no country of India in proportion to its extent and population with which, were the intercourse placed upon a fair and liberal footing, a more valuable commerce could be conducted by Europeans, but especially by our own nation.

I shall here describe in a few words the principles upon which European commerce is at present conducted, obstacles with which it has to struggle, and the most probable means of removing them.

96. I may begin by distinctly stating that the great obstacle to the extension of European commerce is not directly the arbitrary character of the Government itself and the [in]security of property which may be supposed to result from it, for the property of strangers is as secure from positive depredation in the Menam as in the Hooghly, nor from contempt of foreign trade in general, for the Government holds this in the highest esteem, nor from political jealousy itself, for even of this the foreign trade does not experience the effects, but always entirely from the injurious people of the Government interfering in commercial matters, and appearing itself as the chief trader in all the most valuable productions of the country, as well as exercising a monopoly over much of what is imported by strangers.

97. I have already enumerated the principal articles of monopoly. Upon these a fixed price is placed and there is no trade carried on in them with private individuals except clandestinely. Unrestrained dealing on the part of an European merchant is by no means a matter

of course even when the established rules are complied with, for a specific licence must be obtained and every licence so granted is considered as a boon on the part of the Government.

98. The following short detail of the actual circumstances under which the European trade is conducted will convey a more lively impression of its character than any general description. When an European ship arrives off the bar at the mouth of the Menam, she must send a boat to the village of Pak-nam, a distance of 10 miles, for a pilot which will probably have to wait there until communication be had with the Court. The charges for pilotage are extremely moderate. When she arrives at Pak-nam she must there land her cannons and, if required, her small arms and ammunition. When she arrives at the capital, she is not permitted to take her station in that part of the river which the Commander may consider the most convenient for business—she must be moored before the house of the Prah Klang, that she may be more completely under the surveillance of his officers; one or two row boats with Police Officers are placed alongside of her for further security. In this situation no intercourse is allowed between the strangers and the natives except by express permission of the Prah-Klang. This order is enforced by the terror of corporal punishment.

or heavy fines, and a few bold or desperate individuals only infringe it by occasionally coming on board of her at night clandestinely.

99. It is singular that the object of this rigid police is not to hinder that smuggling which leads to defrauding the revenue, for this is a matter which in every case is looked upon as a very venial offence, but to obviate the risk of impairing the value of the officers' perquisites. After the ship is moored a list of the goods is demanded from the merchant and he is desired to land musters of the whole at the house of the Prah Klang. The ostensible object of this is to secure to the King his claim of pre-emption. A scene now takes place highly discreditable to the Government and injurious to the merchant, in which the actors are the Prah-Klang himself in person, and certain naturalized Mahomedans, the descendants of emigrants from various parts of the Coast of Coromandel. These persons will condescend to haggle and bargain for the last farthing. They begin by decrying the goods and by underrating them, offering probably one half of their intrinsic value. The great object which they have in view by this disreputable proceeding is to weary out the patience of the trader, and force him to dispose of his goods below their value.

100. After haggling in this manner for perhaps a fortnight or three weeks, they finally make a selection of the most vendible parts of the cargo. This is divided amongst the party themselves who dispose of them in the open market for their own profit, and even such portions as finally find their way to the palace are charged by the same individuals at an advance of 100 or 200 per cent., notwithstanding that the accommodation of the Court is the original pretext for exerting the claim of pre-emption. It is for the purpose of securing this petty advantage that the Prah Klang and his party maintain the rigid police which I have described. The funds obtained by these means are not paid to the merchant but kept in the hands of the Minister as a source of influence and control over the future conduct of the merchant.

101. The interference of the Government, however, is not confined to the disposal of the import cargo. Its pernicious effects are also felt in the purchase of the returns. With this view intimation is given to the principal Chinese and Siamese merchants to sell nothing to the European trader till the Prah Klang shall have previously sold at his own price a given quantity of produce, and to carry this into effect the same vexatious means are had recourse to as in the purchase of his import cargo.

102. The officers of Government, while they succeed in maintaining the system now described, and which conduces most to their own personal advantage, seem little anxious about their public duties. Corruption and unskilfulness on the part of the officers of revenue are so general that more than two thirds of both the import and export cargoes are generally smuggled;—a matter with which the Prah Klang and his party are always sufficiently acquainted. In illustration of this practice I shall quote an example which fell immediately under my own observation. The English Ship *Phoenix* sold about a fourth part of her import cargo to the Court. Upon this portion the duties could not be evaded and they amounted to about 2,000 ticals. The other three fourths of her cargo she sold to private merchants, and upon these the duties amounted to something less than 800 ticals.

103. With respect to the nominal duties and charges these cannot be deemed oppressive or exorbitant in amount. They consist of a duty on tonnage or rather a measurement duty, an import *ad valorem* duty of 8 per cent., an export duty and certain presents.

104. Although the amount of all these be tolerably well determined, yet from the anxiety of the Prah Klang and his party to maintain an undue and arbitrary influence in

this matter, they endeavour to envelope the subject in as much uncertainty as possible, and in consequence of this I never could obtain from them an official copy of the Siamese tariff. The terms of it however are well understood and may be described as follows. The measurement duty amounts upon vessels of three masts to eighty ticals, upon the Siamese fathom of six feet six inches, and to one half of this amount only upon a brig.

105. The import duty amounts to 8 per cent. The export duty is a fixed and specific impost upon each commodity. Thus upon the great article of European export, sugar, it is $\frac{1}{2}$ tical—the Chinese pecul. The presents are considered to amount generally, upon vessels of every description, to about 1,000 ticals, but as a return is made to the extent of at least 50 per cent. of these, the real amount is no more than 500 ticals. Upon the exportation of bullion or even of the coin of the country is neither duty, restriction nor prohibition, and upon the whole it must be acknowledged that there is nothing illiberal or oppressive in the nominal and ostensible regulations of the Siamese trade in its relation to Europeans and that it is the practice only which is vexatious and oppressive.

106. The following case will illustrate the effect and amount of the duties as they at

present stand. The Brig Phoenix brought a cargo of British and India goods valued at twenty-four thousand two hundred and eighty-two ticals, her measurement duty was 1,499 ticals, her import duties 2,906 ticals, her export duties 6,477 ticals, and the charge for presents 605 ticals. The whole duties amounted thus to 11,500 ticals, which upon the import and export cargo together, worth 148,564 ticals, amounts only to the moderate impost of eight per cent. But this vessel from peculiarity of circumstances paid the full duties upon her whole export cargo, instead of one half or one third as more usually happens. If one half of these therefore be deducted, it will be found that the whole duties upon the export and import cargo will not exceed six per cent.

107. This system of conducting the commercial intercourse with strangers is not an abuse of modern times but has unfortunately always formed a part of the Siamese system of Government from the earliest period of our knowledge of that country. Within late years, indeed, the system, from the increase of other branches of trade, has been rather relaxed or at least acted upon with more moderation. The Chinese trade, as I have observed in another place, is alone conducted upon free and liberal principles. No claim of pre-emption is exercised with regard to their cargoes. They are allowed to buy and sell freely where

they can make the best market, and the effect of this is evident enough in the spirit with which their trade is conducted, its extent and its value. Even the privileges of this nation are of comparatively modern standing. They owed them, I may observe, in the beginning in some degree to the suppleness and servility of their own character, to a feeling on the part of the Government that a free intercourse with this people was exempt from political danger, and above all, the accident already alluded to of one of their own race having sat for a period of many years upon the throne of Siam, who gave peculiar encouragement to the trade and settlement of his countrymen. Some of their more recent privileges, on the other hand, I am convinced they owe to their numbers, their wealth, and their consequent influence, and they now hold the whole of them upon the best security, the fear of the Siamese Government to infringe upon them.

108. All European and American nations are placed upon an equality in respect to trade, as I have already mentioned. The Portuguese, who since 1819 had been allowed a Consul, and have had the import duties upon their trade reduced by 2 per cent., form as we had a personal opportunity of observing ourselves, no real exception to the rule. The personal treatment pursued towards the Consul is such as if observed towards a British Agent must

bring on a war in less than six months. A flagrant example of this is quoted in the Journal where I have described him as being most wantonly placed under arrest, and even threatened with the bastinado. With respect to the reduction of 2 per cent., the advantage accruing from this, from the mode of levying the duty, turns out in fact to be little better than nominal, since, as already mentioned, nearly 3-4ths of these duties are under any circumstances virtually evaded.

109. In 1820, the Government of Batavia sent an Agent to the Court of Siam with a view of renewing the old Treaties which existed and reestablishing the Dutch factory. The result of this mission amounted to a complete failure and I was given to understand upon the best authority, that the conduct observed by the Court towards the Envoy was highly irritating and illiberal. No intercourse whatever has since taken place between the Dutch and Siamese.

110. The Americans with all the prudence and discretion which mark these people as traders, do not seem to have fared better than others. They have received, I was informed at Siam, a promise to be allowed to establish a Consul-ship at Bangkok, but of this permission they have not availed themselves, nor does it appear to me that if they did, it

would be of the slightest utility to them.

111. The supposed interests of the Government and the unquestionable interests of the most powerful party in the state being concerned in maintaining the existing system of restrictions in regard to the commercial intercourse with Europeans, this fact is alone sufficient to account for our own failure in obtaining a free trade. Causes, however, of a temporary or secondary nature contributed, which, could they have been provided for, would in my opinion have placed our trade upon at least a more favourable footing than it now stands. The temporary causes alluded to were the irritation produced by the unlucky and unlooked for occurrence of Queda ; our affording an asylum to the King ; with our positive refusal to deliver him up ; and our express denial of permission to purchase fire-arms at our Settlements while the Siamese and Burmans were at war ; with a certain and natural jealousy of our formidable power in India ; and the apprehension of which, notwithstanding the extraordinary vanity of the Siamese, they are not entirely blind to. Upon the subject of fire-arms they laid extraordinary stress throughout the whole negotiations, and I am convinced that there is no motive which can be held out to them so likely as this to induce them to relax the severity of their commercial restrictions.

112. Before dismissing the subject of Siam, it will be necessary that I should say a few words on the best means of obtaining a share of the valuable trade which this country seems capable of maintaining with European nations. The establishment of a Consul at the capital with this view appears neither an eligible nor adequate measure. Considering the high tone and character which the nature of our Indian relations must compel us always to maintain, and that these must come into direct collision with the extravagant vanity, pretensions and ignorance of the Siamese, it appears to me that it might involve us in a political connection with that people tending to an extension of authority and dominion incompatible with our professed policy. Concluding a commercial treaty with the Siamese, even, if this were easy, seems liable to the same objections.

113. I should be inclined to prefer to these, did a fair opportunity offer, the formation of a commercial emporium in one of the islands of the Gulf of Siam, exactly on the same principles as our establishment at Singapore. The uninhabited group of the Si-Chang Islands, which contains a fine harbour and lies in the direct route of the native commerce of the Gulf, offers a most advantageous situation for such an emporium. Were this or a similar position under the security and protection of

an European Government, I might safely venture to predict that it would immediately become an entrepôt for the principal portion of the trade which countries in the Gulf of Siam conduct with Cochin China and the western and southern parts of Asia, while it would create an extension of European commerce with those countries of which there has been hitherto no example.

114. Of the Siamese trade our establishment at Singapore has indeed already attracted.* *[There appears to be an omission here]* The position of Singapore, however, though in general so highly favourable as an emporium, is not calculated to secure those advantages which I have now speculated upon in an emporium formed within the Gulf of Siam, for it lies far out of the direct route of that great intercourse which the countries on the Gulf maintain with China, a trade which in fact greatly exceeds that of Singapore, native and European put together. No part of this trade can ever centre in Singapore, and therefore this place is inadequate to secure to our trade the advantages which I have contemplated as attainable in our emporium at the head of the Gulf of Siam.

[Paragraphs 115 to 180 deal with Cochin China.]

181. I shall conclude this report with a

few general reflections upon the advantages which may result to our trade from an extended commercial intercourse with Siam and Cochin China, the great object of the mission with which I had the honor to be entrusted. These two kingdoms between them certainly contain not less than *11,00,000 of inhabitants, who in point of civilization stand at least in the second rank of Asiatic Nations, and whose Governments, although arbitrary and despotic, still afford a certain protection to the lives and properties of their subjects, and are probably after all not worse than the generality of Eastern Governments, while for more security they are greatly superior to those of all the minor nations and tribes of Asia.

(* sic.)

182. No intercourse having taken place with these nations for upwards of a century should a commerce be established with them it will not be too much to assert that *11,00,000 of consumers and producers will shortly be added to the mass of our Indian commerce. This population inhabits a fertile country, and chiefly lies upon the shores of the most frequented or accessible portions of the Indian Seas. Both nations are at the same time now in a state more favourably circumstanced for maintaining a foreign commerce than in any known period of their history. Regular and even strong Governments are established in

(* sic.)

them, and they have now both been, for some years, recovered from a long period of anarchy and civil war. The Siamese it appears to me are likely to become the most extensive consumers of our Indian and European manufactured goods, particularly of our cottons. From the sketches I have given of their trade some opinion may be entertained of their taste and capacity for their consumption of these, and their ability to afford returns. The Cochin Chinese from their peculiarity of taste, and the state of society amongst them, are upon the whole not so likely to be such extensive consumers of our manufactured goods as the Siamese, with perhaps the exception of woollens, but they are more likely to occasion a demand, directly or indirectly, for the raw or unwrought productions of our Indian possessions.

183. I am inclined to hope that the trade of Siam and Cochin China will also afford an indirect channel for the employment of our capital, still more extensive and advantageous than the direct trade with those nations themselves. I mean a trade with China. This is more particularly applicable to Cochin China than to Siam, because it lies more in the direct route of trade and Chinese vessels which frequent its ports stand more in need of return cargoes than they do in Siam, but it applies indeed to both, and embraces

an aggregate trade amounting to 60,000
tons.

* * * * *

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

Calcutta

the 3d April 1823.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 90,
pp. 688-90.

FORT CORWALLIS the 7 August 1823.

Mr. Secy. Swinton, To,
Fort William,
27 June
1823.

W. S. CRACROFT Esquire

Acting Secretary to Government

Prince of Wales Island.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt
 of your dispatch dated 21st February last,*
 forwarding translation of a letter from the
 Siamese Minister called the Prab Klang to the
 address of the Honorable the Governor, and an
 original letter from the second Minister Paya
 Pipat Kosa to the address of the Persian Se-
 cretary, and to transmit for the information of
 the Governor in Council, copy of the reply
 which it has been determined to return to the
 latter, through the Resident at Singapore.

* covering letter
not copied.

2. The Governor General in Council is
 apprized that Mr. Crawford has already com-
 municated personally to the Government of
 Prince of Wales Island the results of his Mis-
 sion to Siam as far as its relations are imme-
 diately concerned. I am now instructed to
 transmit for the information and consideration
 of the Honorable the Governor in Council
 copies of the detailed Journals of Mr. Craw-

furd's proceedings and negotiations both in Siam and Cochin China, and of his report on the political state and commercial resources of those countries, with copy of the instructions issued by this Government in reply.

3. I am directed to take this opportunity of repairing an accidental omission at the time by communicating to the Government of Prince of Wales Island Mr. Crawford's appointment to the situation of Resident at Singapore. His instructions provide for his conducting, on the part of the Supreme Government, any incidental political duties which may arise connected with Siam and Cochin China, as well as with the neighbouring independent Malay States situated to the Eastward of the Straits of Malacca, and he has been directed to transmit both to this department and to Penang, any information of events and proceedings in those countries of which it may be useful for either Government to be apprized.

I have &c.

(Signed) GEO : SWINTON

Secy. to Govt.

Fort William

27 June 1823.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 301, pp. 691-4.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 7 August 1823.

Enclosure one
in letter from
Mr. Secretary
Swinton at
Fort William
dated 27 June.

Draft of a letter to the Siamese Minister.

I have received your Excellency's letter and laid it before the Honble. the Governor General of India, who directs me to write as follows. The Governor General sent a Mission to His Majesty the King of Siam in the year 1822 to request that a friendly intercourse might be opened between the Kingdom of Siam and the British possessions, and that free trade might be established on both sides. In accordance with this proposition the merchants of Siam were invited to frequent the ports of Western India on the terms of the most favoured nations, and the ports of Penang and Singapore were entirely thrown open to them. Mr. Crawford, the Governor General's envoy, demanded similar or equal advantages for the English in the ports of Siam, but the Government of Siam would make no changes, and the regulations of trade in regard to European nations are irksome and burdensome, and as long as they continue in force the English cannot trade to Siam with advantage. This your Excellency knows is the true cause why the attempt on our part to establish an intercourse of friendship and commerce was not altogether successful. Let the Siamese admit the English and American nations to trade on the same terms

as the Chinese and friendship and commerce will prosper. The Siamese are admitted into our ports on the same terms as the Chinese or any other nation, and it would be fair and equitable that we should be admitted to trade in Siam on terms of reciprocal advantage.

The Governor General in Council approves the conduct of Mr. Crawford. The letter of which he was the bearer referred to the personal instructions which he received and he has done nothing contrary to them. He was not only the bearer of a letter like ordinary envoys, but also the Representative of the Governor General, and of this your Excellency was fully aware. The Siamese had permitted the Portuguese to establish a Commercial Agent at Siam, and they had promised the same thing to the Americans. There was therefore nothing unreasonable in Mr. Crawford's requesting a similar advantage for the English, but finding that the proposal was not agreeable to the Siamese Government he forebore to urge it.

Respecting the measuring of rivers, the constructing of maps, and the counting of the population alluded to in your Excellency's letter, and the pretended intention of the English to seize upon Siam, these your Excellency cannot but be aware are the calumnies of idle or designing men, and are unworthy of the frankness and sincerity of a friendly nation.

The Governor General directs me further to say that he feels regret for the misconduct of private individuals of the English nation at Siam should such have taken place. Touching the affair of Messrs Smith and Storm the Governor General wishes they had been better acquainted with the customs of Siam, but cannot think their ignorance or even indiscretion worthy of punishment by stripes or fetters or imprisonment. These persons complain that they were long detained in Siam and that they found the regulations of trade oppressive.

In token of the Governor General's friendship and respect for His Majesty he begs to send with this letter a few trifling articles as presents.

(A true Copy)

(Signed) GEO. SWINTON.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 90, pp. 695-707.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 7 August 1823.

To

J. CRAWFURD Esquire,

Resident at Singapore.

Sir,

The Governor General in Council having had under deliberate consideration the Journal of your proceedings in Siam and Cochin China, and your general report on the state and resources of those countries, I am now directed to communicate to you his sentiments and observations on such of the points comprised in the above interesting and valuable documents as require official notice.

2. A perusal of the Journal has served to confirm and augment the favourable opinion before intimated of the zeal, judgment and discretion which characterised the whole of your proceedings in the execution of the duties confided to you, and the Governor General in Council has now further to record his high sense of the value and importance of the information contained in your report, regarding the political and social condition of the countries visited by you, their commercial resources and the demands of their markets, the temper and

policy of the Court and their relations with other neighbouring or with European Powers. Your diligence and perseverance in collecting materials under all the disadvantages against which you had to contend, are no less striking and commendable than the ability and perspicuity with which the result of your researches has been exhibited in the paper before Government. The clear and distinct view indeed, which it affords of the actual state and existing resources of those interesting regions might justly be considered no inadequate return for the cost of the Mission even had its direct and immediate objects failed altogether of accomplishment.

3. With respect to the political result of your Mission, the Governor General in Council observes, that as far as regards Cochin China, the views and expectations of the Government in the deputation of an Envoy to that Court have been substantially realised.

* * * * *

5. In Siam little or no positive advantage has been secured to our trade, and regret at the indifferent success of your negotiations at that Court is enhanced by the information which you have afforded of the great commercial resources and capabilities of the country and the taste prevailing in the Siamese

markets for some of our staple manufactures. The foundations however of a friendly intercourse with the Government have been laid by your visit there, and this circumstance, combined with the knowledge acquired of the characters of the principal persons of the Court and of the precise obstacles which oppose the accomplishment of our views, may be considered to have prepared the way for the future admission of British commerce on an equitable and mutually advantageous footing, under a more wise and liberal administration than the present one. Whatever may be the real ground of the objection of the Siamese to a fair and unrestricted trade with European nations generally, and with the English in particular, the failure to remove these may doubtless, as you have observed, be in part ascribed to accidental and temporary causes, and there would further appear to be something in the character and disposition of the Prah Klang or Minister for Foreign Affairs and his party peculiarly unfavourable to a more intimate connection and intercourse with British subjects, which reluctance, it is reasonable to hope, may exist in a less degree with others hereafter, more especially when experience shall have shown that by driving away the European trade altogether through the operation of their restrictions they must necessarily destroy the sources of the profit which those restrictions are intended to secure. Any eventual change in the

Siamese Ministry therefore, and the example of Cochin China, should a free intercourse with that quarter be established, might be expected to produce an alteration propitious to the accomplishment of our views at some future period and this prospect deserves to be kept steadily in view. Your situation as Resident at Singapore will enable you to procure information of all that passes at Siam, and to avail yourself of any opening that may occur favourable to the promotion of the views which suggested the deputation of an Envoy, and it is the desire of the Governor General in Council, that you should endeavour to maintain a correspondence and communication with that Court, more especially with the Deputy Minister Pra Pipat Cosa, who seems to have been personally friendly and well disposed towards the Mission.

6. It is of course of great importance, the Governor General in Council observes, to have learnt both the precise nature of the obstacles which exist to prevent an advantageous trade with Siam and also the means of obtaining a share of the valuable commerce which you consider the latter country capable of conducting with European nations, should the Government persist in refusing to admit of dealings in their own ports free of the vexatious and ruinous restrictions which now prevail. Your suggestions therefore regarding

the formation of a commercial establishment on the uninhabited group of the Si-Chang Islands, is considered to merit every consideration, and will be borne in mind against the occurrence of any opportunity favourable for its execution hereafter.

7. The Governor General in Council has particularly adverted to the circumstance that the concession on our part of permission to the Siamese Government to purchase fire arms at Calcutta and other Presidencies would to all appearance have induced the King to grant the freedom of commerce in his ports, which it was a special object of your Mission to obtain. It is not apparent that any very weighty reasons exist against granting the permission, and it is perhaps therefore to be regretted that you did not consider your instructions to authorize your entering more decidedly into the views of the Siamese Court on this point.

8. The Governor General in Council has perused with considerable interest the sketch given by you of the political relations of the Siamese nation with the Burmese, the interminable war and irreconcilable enmity which prevail between them, the anxiety of the former for the recovery of their ports and territories on the western side of the Peninsula, and the feelings which any extension of our connection

with the state of Siam would infallibly create at the Court of Ava. The estimate afforded by you likewise of the military strength of the Siamese and your account of the vulnerable points in the situation of their territories, are extremely worthy of attention.

9. As it appears that the information of a commercial nature contained in your report should be made generally known, the Government has it in contemplation to print off a number of copies for distribution amongst the mercantile branches of the community, omitting such portions as it is obviously proper to confine to the records of Government. Copies likewise both of the report and Journal will be transmitted to the Government of Prince of Wales Island.

10. You have been already apprized of the letters addressed by Phraya Pipat Kosa, the Second Minister for Commercial Affairs, to the Persian Secretary, and by the Prah Klang to the Governor of Prince of Wales Island in explanation of the conduct of the Siamese Government towards the Mission, and also of their treatment of Mr. Storm and Captain Smith and had an opportunity of stating the observations which occurred to you on the subject in your letter, dated the 3d April* last. The admitted failure of the Mission to establish friendly intercourse and connection is indirectly

* See *Bengal Pol.*
Cora. Range 123
vol. 36.

ascribed in those tortuous and uncandid productions partly to the circumstances of Embassies never having been customary between the two nations and partly to your conduct in the discharge of your public functions. The Governor General in Council is disposed to agree with you in ascribing the letters to fear and apprehension on the part of the Siamese Ministers for the consequences of their unfriendly and illiberal proceedings, and it can scarcely be necessary to add, considers that your explanations on the subject, together with the information afforded by the Journal, are quite conclusive as to the futility of the accusations preferred against yourself personally.

11. The sentiments of the Governor General in Council are sufficiently indicated in the accompanying draft * of the reply which it has been determined to return to the Minister's Letter. The original is likewise enclosed, which you will be pleased to forward by the first opportunity with a correct Malay translation prepared under your superintendence and the present therein referred to, or any other article which you may judge to be suitable and proper.

12. Enclosed I have also the honor to transmit a copy of my letter to the Acting Secretary to the Government * of Prince of Wales Island, and I am directed to desire,

* See ante.

* See ante,
27 June 1823.

that conformably with what is therein stated,
you will be pleased to furnish to that Govern-
ment any information of the nature alluded to.

I have &c. &c.

(Signed) GEO: SWINTON

Secry. to the Govt.

Fort William

27 June 1823.

Bengal Letters
Received,
vol. 90.

To the Honorable the Court of Directors for
Affairs of the Honorable the United Com-
pany of Merchants of England Trading
to the East Indies.

Honorable Sirs,

* See ante, vol. 89
of this series.

In our dispatch of the 23d November 1821,*
we reported our resolution to depute a Mission
to the Kingdoms of Siam and Cochin China,
for the accomplishment of certain commercial
objects ; and with our address of the 27th
December last we had the honor to transmit
copies of such accounts of the proceedings of
the Governor General's Agent, Mr. Crawford,
as had reached us at that time.

2. We now beg leave to submit, for
the consideration of your Honorable Court,
the detailed Journal of the Agent's proceedings
and negotiations, and his report on the political
result of the Mission and the Countries visited
by him

3. The perusal of Mr. Crawford's Jour-
nal served to confirm and augment the favour-
able opinion before intimated by us of the zeal,
judgment and discretion which characterized
the whole of his proceedings in the conduct of
the duties confided to him ; and we expressed
a high sense of the value and importance of
the information contained in his report, re-

garding the political and social condition of the countries of Siam and Cochin China, their commercial resources and the demands of their markets, the temper and policy of the Courts, and their relations with other neighbouring and with European Powers. We trust that your Honorable Court will see reason to concur in the above sentiments of approval and commendation.

* * * * *

5. In Siam, it must be acknowledged, little or no positive advantage has been gained for our trade, and our regret at the failure of the Agent's negotiations at that Court is naturally enhanced by the information, now communicated, of the great commercial resources and capabilities of the country, and the decided taste prevailing in its markets for several of the staple manufactures of Britain. Still, however, the Mission may be considered to have, in some measure, paved the way for the future admission of British commerce in the Ports of Siam on a liberal and mutually advantageous footing, with the view to the furtherance of which object we have desired Mr. Crawford, who has been appointed to the situation of Resident at Singapore, to avail himself of every opportunity of maintaining a friendly correspondence with the Court of Bangkok, and establishing a reciprocity of good offices.

6. Mr. Crawford's suggestions relative to the formation of a commercial establishment on the uninhabited group of the Si-Chang Islands at the head of the Gulf of Siam, and the survey of the Anambas and Natunas Islands with similar views, will doubtless attract the attention of your Honorable Court. Though they appear to us to merit consideration, we should not, under present circumstances, feel ourselves warranted in adopting such measures, more especially without the previous sanction of the authorities in England.

* * * * *

9. Shortly after the return of the Governor General's Agent to this Presidency, we received through the Government of Prince of Wales Island, a memorial from Mr. Storm, supercargo of the Brig Phoenix, complaining of an outrage committed on himself and the Commander of the vessel by the Siamese Government. We communicated with Mr. Crawford on the subject and came to the conclusion, that under all the circumstances of the case, the British Government would not be warranted in making the ill usage undoubtedly sustained by the above individuals, matter of official remonstrance with the King of Siam.

10. A letter was subsequently received from the Siamese Minister to the address of

the Persian Secretary, with translation of one from the same quarter to the address of the Governor in Council of Fort Cornwallis, which entered into explanations on the subject of the above occurrence, and further indirectly attempted to justify the refusal of the Siamese Court to accede to the views of our Envoy, by casting blame on his demeanour and proceedings. We, of course, called upon Mr. Crawford to state any observations which might occur to him on the letters, and his reply, together with the information contained in the Journal, appeared to us quite conclusive as to the futility of the accusations advanced against him personally

* * * * *

13. We submit likewise with this dispatch copies of the latest correspondence which has passed with the Government of Prince of Wales's Island on the subject of the affairs of the Rajah of Quedah.

14. From these documents your Honorable Court will perceive that there is little or no prospect of that ill-fated Prince recovering his territories, either from the justice or clemency of his Liege Lord, the King of Siam, or through his own exertions, aided by any of the Malay Chiefs, and that he appears disposed to abide by the advice offered him by the

Governor in Council of Prince of Wales's Island
and repeated by us, to remain quietly on the
Island of Penang under the protection of the
British Government, without involving himself
in the hazard of attempts to regain his throne
by force.

We have &c.

J. ADAM

JOHN FENDALL

J. H. HARRINGTON

Fort William

18th July 1823.

[Endorsed]

1823

Fort William

Poll. Dept.

Triplicate letter from the
Honble. the Govr. General
in Council Dated 18 July

No. 1

Recd.

Per Morley

15 March 1824.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements.
vol. 101,
pp. 1499-1501.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 19 May 1825.

To GEORGE SWINTON Esquire

Political Dep.

Secretary to the Govt.

Fort William.

Sir,

In obedience to the instructions of the Government directing me to furnish from time to time such information respecting the Political interests of the Countries to the Eastward of the Straits of Malacca as it might be useful for the Government to be possessed of, I now respectfully submit the following notes.

The commercial intercourse between Singapore and Siam continued to increase in value and amount: Within the last six months twenty-one Junks have arrived at this place from the Port of Bangkok and a large ship of the King which was in the habit of formerly proceeding to Calcutta or Bombay stopped this year at Singapore where she disposed of a Cargo of considerable value consisting of tin, pepper and sugar. No European vessel however has during the last year visited Siam and the Americans also appear for a time to have abandoned their intercourse with it.

The enterprizes which the Siamese seemed at one period to have been meditating for the complete subjugation of the Malayan States on the Gulph of Siam have for the present been abandoned.

Some fear is probably entertained by the Siamese Government on account of an apprehended league against them between the Burmahs and Cochin Chinese. The Cochin Chinese Mission to Ava, which it is alleged had the object in view accompanied by a Burmah Mission, passed this place in the month of May on its return to Cochin China.

I have had hitherto no communication with the Siamese Government but propose to renew an intercourse with the Court on the first favourable opportunity confining myself to matters purely of a local or commercial character.

* * * * *

I have &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD

Resident.

Singapore

2d August 1823.

A True Copy

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD

Resident.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 101,
pp. 1520-22.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 19 May 1825.

The letter of Mr. Crawford, British Resident of Singapore, to His Excellency the Chou Phia Prab Klang Suriwongs Kosa.

I have the honor to send by the hands of Mr. Gillies a letter from the Secretary to the Supreme Government, which is in answer to that of your Excellency dated the 11th day of the dark half of the Moon, and in the 1st Moon of the year 1,184 or the Horse, and along with it some glass ware as a gift from the Governor General to His Majesty.

The news of the treaty concluded at Siam in the seventh month on the 2d day of the dark half of the moon, in the year of the Horse, having been received by the English Merchants they have begun to avail themselves of it, and Mr. Gillies's ship is the first vessel which has come direct from England bound for the ports of Siam. I beg your Excellency's cordial attention and assistance to Mr. Gillies that the treatment which he receives may become an example and an encouragement to other English Merchants who may hereafter visit Siam.

It gives me pleasure to inform your Excellency that there exists now no objection to

the merchants of England supplying the Siamese Government with firearms. The cargo of Mr. Gillies's ship indeed consists almost wholly of this article, a circumstance which I trust will be considered a convincing proof of esteem and confidence.

The Governor General has been pleased to nominate me Resident of Singapore. In this situation I shall have it in my power to give proofs of my esteem and respect for the Siamese Government in the assistance and protection which I will make it my business to afford to the Merchants of Siam. I request on your Excellency's part a similar attention to the interests of our traders who may visit Siam.

In token of friendship I have to request your Excellency's acceptance of an Emerald ring.

(Signed) J. CRAWFORD

Resident.

? [9 September 1823.]

Home Series,
Miscellaneous,
vol. 673,

[1823.]

Memo. on Dr. Crawford's Mission to Siam
and Cochin China, as reported in the Political
Letters from Bengal of the 23d November
1821 and 27th December 1822.

* See ante, *Bengal*
Letters Received,
vol. 55.

In their Political Letter of the 23d. November 1821,* the Supreme Government inform the Court that, taking into consideration the depressed state of Commerce in England and in India, they had resolved to send an Agent to Siam and Cochin China, for the purpose of establishing a commercial intercourse with those countries upon a surer footing than had hitherto existed; and that they had selected Dr. Crawford of the Bengal Medical Establishment for that service, on account of the diplomatic experience he had acquired at Java, and his peculiar knowledge of the languages, trade, institutions &c. of the Eastern Islands.

As their principal inducements for this undertaking, they observed, that as the trade of Europeans with those countries formed an important and valuable branch of intercourse with Asia in the earlier and ruder period of Anglo Indian History, there was little doubt but that a considerable addition would be made to it, in the improved state of modern navigation and the superior intelligence and spirit of adventure which characterized British Merchants of the present day. That as those

Countries contained a population of at least thirty millions, possessed a soil of equal fertility to that of any portion of the globe, were almost devoid of manufactures, and had afforded a ready market for the imperfect and high priced fabrics of India and China, it might be fairly presumed, from the success which had attended modern trade with Hindostan, the Eastern Islands and China that, the groundless fears and jealousies which influenced those Governments once removed, an extensive demand would be created for woollens, cotton goods, raw wrought iron, Bengal opium and various other minor articles. For these, it was observed, that Siam might make valuable returns to Europe and Western Asia of Sugar and Pepper, Salt for the Indian Islands, and Teak for the British Settlements, to which Cochin China would add raw silk in such abundance (being the most productive country in that article in Asia) as might place the English manufacturer, under an improved regulation of the trade, upon a footing with the Continental.

Trade at *Siam* is at present carried on by certain Chinese residing there, who bring its produce to the European Ports in the Straits of Malacca and receive European and Indian goods in return ; and at Cochin China by Chinese junks and a few Colonial Portuguese traders, who would speedily yield to the energy

of Europeans. Even under existing disadvantages a considerable trade is maintained between Siam and Prince of Wales Island and, for the last five years, with Americans and British Country Traders.

The opening of an intercourse with *Cochin China*, which has only been attempted twice since the seventeenth century, (once in 1773 which failed in consequence of the distracted state of the Country and the imprudent conduct of the Agent in involving himself in its hostilities, and 2dly in 1804 which was frustrated by the French) would be more difficult : but as the French are said to have succeeded in concluding a treaty with that State and have some missionaries residing there ; as the Dutch succeeded in procuring a cargo so lately as 1820 ; and the pecuniary advantages derived by China from her intercourse with England and India must necessarily operate as a strong temptation to a mercenary government like the one in question, they had few doubts but that temperance and perseverance would at length induce that government to put our trade with it upon, at all events, a footing with that carried on with China. Instructions to this effect were accordingly addressed to Dr. Crawford on the 29th Sept. 1821,* accompanied by letters and presents to the Kings of Siam and Cochin China, the former of whom had already opened a Correspondence upon Commercial

* See *Bengal Political Cons.*
Range 122 vol. 64.

subjects with the Resident at Singapore.

The political letter from Bengal of the 27th Decr. 1822,* just received, reports the result of this Mission. From this it appears that in consequence of the continued preponderance of the party which had occasioned the expulsion of the King of Queda from his dominions under the pretence of his having refused to cooperate with their forces against the Burmans, Dr. Crawford had failed in his attempt at procuring his restoration: but that the right of the British Government to the sovereignty of P. of W. Island and the discontinuance of the payment of the annual sum of 10,000 Dollars to the King of Queda (by whom the Island was ceded to the British) upon the death of the exiled sovereign, which was involved in that question, had not even been alluded to during the discussion. Dr. Crawford thinks too that the high tone assumed by him during the discussion is likely to produce a more conciliatory line of conduct on the part of the Chief of Ligor than has been hitherto manifested by him towards the Penang Government; and conceives that the approximation of the Siamese to P. of W. Island, by the conquest of Queda, is more likely to lead to a good understanding with that pusillanimous tho' arrogant Government, than otherwise. Should any occurrence lead to a rupture with it, one Gun Brig would be sufficient to put a

* Not copied, repeats substance of letter of 23 Nov. 1821.

stop to its trade, and another to destroy its capital.

In regard to the main object of the Mission, the establishment of a commercial intercourse, Dr. Crawford reports that although he had at first succeeded in procuring the consent of the Government to the establishment of a "free and fair intercourse" between the two nations, he had the mortification of finding those words expunged and a pledge of assistance from the officers of Government substituted in the letters which were addressed to him and to the Supreme Government, just before his departure. The only concession, too, which he was able to procure in regard to duties was their continuance on their present footing, a circumstance that may be attributed to the monopoly which the Government had extended to almost every article produced in the country. These Reports were dated on the 13th July 1822,* soon after which Dr. Crawford left the place for Cochin China. On the 19th October of the same year the attention of the Government of P. of W. Island was drawn to an outrage committed by the Siamese authorities on the Captain and Supra Cargo of a vessel called the Phoenix, of so gross and apparently unprovoked a nature as cannot possibly be overlooked by our Government.

* See *Bengal Pol.*
Comm. Range 123.
vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 19th March 1824.

No. 5 Contd.

Copy of a letter from the Siamese Minister
to the Resident at Singapore.

[Jan. or Feb.
1824].

A letter from the Chao Phrayah Phra
Klang of Siam, to John Crawford Esqr.,
Resident of Singapore.

Having been informed by the return of
junks last year that you are appointed Resident
of Singapore, and that you are making every
effort to promote the trade of that port, I have
ordered the Superintendent of His Majesty's
Customs to prepare the ship *Hera*, Khun
Chamnan Wanit, Commander, and Khun
Wichhit Supercargo of the said ship, who
have the charge of His Majesty's property,
and are to proceed to Singapore with a view
of trading there ; both the Commander and the
Supercargo are ignorant of European manners
and customs, and I beg you will allow them to
trade peaceably.

They have six pikals of tin, one pikal of
elephants teeth, and two pikals of gamboge,
which I hope you will do me the favour to
accept.

FORT WILLIAM 12th March 1824.

No. 8.

To J. CRAWFURD Esqre.

Resident at Singapore.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters reporting the growing commercial intercourse of Singapore with Siam and other Indo-Chinese nations ; also regarding the proceedings of the Netherlandish Government and its officers in the Eastern Seas, and on other points connected with our political interests to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca. The whole of these dispatches have been perused with great interest by the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council, who finds in them much to demand the serious consideration of the Supreme Government, and the Home Authorities, but a few points only appear to call for any specific orders or observations on the present occasion.

2. The intelligence furnished by you of the increasing resort of junks from Siam, Camboja and Cochin China to the Port of Singapore is satisfactory to Government, and His Lordship in Council desires me to express his entire approbation of your manner of receiving and treating the deputation from the

latter country, as also of your forwarding letters with presents on their return to the principal Cochin Chinese Chiefs with whom you had previously held intercourse.

3. The occasion taken by you of opening a correspondence with the Court of Siam, and of following up that already begun with Cochin China, by the Marianna was judiciously chosen, and the tenor of your letters appears entirely appropriate. The transmission of presents on such an occasion was, of course, indispensable, and the Governor General in Council will be prepared to sanction the expense incurred under that head on receiving the detailed account of it. Your manner of treating the question of supplying fire arms to the Siamese by British vessels was fully warranted by the circumstances and considerations to which you refer. At the present moment, indeed, in our actual state of warfare with the Burman Empire it may be considered a decided object of policy to furnish the people of Siam with means of offence against the common enemy to the utmost practicable extent.

4. The arrangements and proceedings of the Dutch Government, both political and as affecting British commerce, reported in your dispatches under acknowledgment, have not failed to attract the particular attention of the Supreme Government, and will be brought

specially to the notice of the Home Authorities in a reference now under preparation regarding the affairs of Singapore, and the British Interests in the Eastern Seas. In the mean time I am directed to observe that the answer returned by you to the letter from the Raja of Siak, communicating the overtures made to him by the Netherlandish Commissioners, was entirely correct and judicious.

5. His Lordship in Council regrets to observe the increasing audacity of the Illanoon pirates, as evinced by their recent capture of a second European vessel on the coast of Java. The steps taken by you for effecting the release of Mr. Robert Thornton are entirely approved, and it will be satisfactory to Government to learn that the exertion of your good offices and humane interference on this occasion has been attended with success.

I have &c.

(Signed) G. SWINTON

Secy. to the Govt.

Fort William

12th March 1824.

Bengal Secret
Correspondence,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 33.

Pol. Dept.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

Secretary to the Government

Fort William.

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Governor General in Council that the English Brig Shannon sailed for Siam on the 15th Inst., having on board, besides a valuable investment of British Manufactures, 4,000 muskets and a considerable quantity of ammunition. I have taken this opportunity of addressing to the Siamese Minister the letter of which a copy is appended to this dispatch. The first communication from Siam will [?not] take place earlier than the month of October.

I have &c.

* [sic. ? Crawford.]

(Signed) J. CAMPBELL*

Resident.

Singapore

17th August 1824.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 33 Contd.

The letter of J. Crawford, Esqre., Resident of Singapore, to his Excellency the Chao-Phrayah Prah Klang Chao-Khun-Kosa.

On former occasions I have had the honor to communicate to your Excellency the war which the English had undertaken against the Burmans and the provocations which led to it, and I have now the satisfaction to state that Rangoon, Cheduba and Negrais have been conquered. One large army is marching upon Ummerapura by the route of Rangoon, and another will invade Arracan from the frontiers of Bengal. Enclosed I send your Excellency a copy of the dispatch which announces the capture of Rangoon. The vessel which bears this letter conveys to the Court, cannon, muskets and ammunition, for which they have permission from the Governor General of India. I rely upon your kindness and friendly disposition towards Mr. Hunter and Captain Norquoy and rest assured that their conduct will be such as to merit your protection. I again beg to know from you, how the English and Siamese can best assist each other in conducting the war against the Burmans. I shall soon address your Excellency again.

(Signed) J. CRAWFORD.

Singapore
13th August 1824.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 41.

Singapore, 28th August 1824.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.,

Secretary to Government in the
Political Department.

Sir,

I must respectfully beg leave to state for the information of the Right Honble. the Governor General in Council that Mr. Milton a missionary of this place, to whom I gave a letter to translate into Siamese to the address of Chow Phraya Praklang at Bangkok, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose, after keeping the same in his possession seven days, and after having given it to another translator, did hand the said letter to the Resident of this settlement in a manner that he conceives he is obliged to forward the same to the Right Honble. the Governor General in Council. As this letter was never intended to be made public, and merely written in very plain language to suit the capacity of an ignorant translator, I most respectfully trust that you will make explanation to the Right Honble Board.

I am perfectly aware that the Right

Honble. the Governor General in Council, in reply to a dispatch of Mr. Crawford, the Resident, relative to the arms forwarded by me in the Schooner Marianna last year, rather approved of the measure of supplying the Siamese with warlike stores than otherwise, and for those sent on the Shannon I have the Resident's express permission, and to convince the Right Honble. the Governor General in Council that I have done nothing secretly, I beg leave to transmit herewith copy of the usual report (of that vessel's cargo) sent into the Master Attendant's Office by those dispatching a vessel and duly attested by that officer. With regard to the opinion I hazarded in stating that the Burman King would be a prisoner in Calcutta in six months, I beg leave to state that I did so solely from the hatred I know that exists between the two rival kingdoms, and to give the Minister (who is personally attached to me and with whom I have been in constant correspondence since my visit to Siam in 1821) a high idea of the power of the British arms.

The guard I mentioned I bring with me when I visit Siam will be that of the Sultan of Tringano, who wishes me to arrange some dispute about his tribute to the Crown of Siam that has been going on for these three years past.

It perhaps may not be considered as im-

proper for me to communicate to you for the information of Government the latest intelligence I have had from Bangkok ; it is up to the end of June. The Minister then writes as follows :—

(Extract.)

“Rumours are abroad that the English have taken the Burman Country. Can this be true, and what is the cause ? Do you believe that the new Rajah intends to take China ? I wish you were here to remove the cloud that overspreads these events.”

(Extract.)

And again from the Bundaharrah of Patani July the 25th. “The forces of the Conqueror are let loose on the face of the earth and they will meet the Burmans in the Trang and from the frontier of Laos.”

It is my firm belief from the local knowledge I obtained of the Siamese and their country while remaining in it, that they will merely station their armies on the frontier and send down an army or rabble to Tavoy stockade, themselves advancing as they know the Burmans are out of the way or beat by the British.

It is my intention to proceed to Bangkok in all next month, when I trust I will be able to convince the Siamese that they have

nothing to fear from the British, and that it will be well for them to send their best troops into the heart of the Burman country. I have little doubt of success, having gained the confidence of that Government [and] having carried on a most extensive trade for these last three years without the slightest dispute with that Government or populace, my orders having always been to conform to all the laws of the country, and I have found by observing a rigid adherence to these and honorable conduct being observed in all transactions with the Siamese, that the Government of Siam certainly cannot be reckoned as unfavourable or harsh towards the British Merchant, although I am the only one who has succeeded in establishing and continues to prosecute a prosperous, extensive and increasing trade.

In conclusion I beg leave to state for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that on my arrival in Bangkok, should I find the Siamese Government at all hostile to the British, which however I have not the slightest apprehension of, that I will not deliver a further supply of 10,000 stand of muskets I have here and intend taking for that Government, but shall immediately communicate the intelligence to the Supreme Government.

I have &c.
(Signed) JOHN MORGAN.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 42. TO HIS EXCELLENCY CHOW KHOOH KOSA,
Chow Phraya Praklang
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Bangkok.

I had already the honor of addressing your Excellency for the Bombay Brig Dotaboy and now again have that pleasure by my brother, to whom I beg your Excellency will pay all attention and protect, as he is a very young man and unacquainted with these countries. I have directed him to follow your Excellency's advice in all respects, and instructed him how to conduct himself in your country and which advice I will hear from your own mouth whether he has followed.

It is needless for me to say more on this subject, and your Excellency I am sure will admit that since I was in Bangkok all the people that I sent there behaved themselves with all propriety.

My brother is at present my sole representative and has all my papers to this effect, which will be shewn you by him. Captain Thornton merely belongs to the ship and has not power over the cargo. I have given parti-

cular directions that nothing should be sold without consulting you. The Captain and officers may have in their cabins some small quantity of goods, but of this I know nothing. There cannot be much however.

I have sent for His Majesty the King . .

	Muskets	500
for the Prince Krom		
Mün Chiat	..	150
for your Excellency	..	100
		<hr/>
		750

And all for His Majesty 20 Pieces of Artillery for the Fort at Paknam : also a large curious bird that can eat iron and fight with dogs. I have also an animal of the kind as the drawing, but this I intend to deliver His Majesty when I visit him. I will leave this next month.

I have the pleasure to send your Excellency several newspapers which my brother will read relative to the war with the Burmans, and your Excellency may rely upon what I say, that in six months the Burman King will be a prisoner in Calcutta Fort. I have directed my brother to make all the necessary presents and I beg you will give him a list so as he may may do what is proper.

I have told him to build a Cadgan House down about the Portuguese Factory as I cannot

live at your Palace, it interferes so much with your family and I shall have upwards of twenty servants besides a guard along with me. You will therefore be pleased to order him all assistance so as he may get the house ready in time.

You will also be pleased to order the Chinamen to pay into my brother's hands according to the accompanying* account and I hope also that you will punish them for not coming here according to their agreement.

I am &c.

(Signed) J. MORGAN.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 34 Confd.

Memoranda for Mr. Gillies.

The thousand muskets are intended for the King of Siam—the gold watch and coral for the Prince Kroma Chiat, and the double barrelled fowling piece and emerald ring for the Prah-Klang. You have a letter for the Prince and another for the Prah Klang.

Should the Prince and Minister of their own accord, which is not improbable, introduce the subject of our hostilities with the Burmans, say that Mergui and Tavoy have been occupied by our troops, and that as soon as the dry season sets in two great armies will march upon Amarapura, the Burman capital, and that we are determined not to lay down our arms until we shall have dictated a safe peace to the Burmans. Inform them that we have no intention of conquering or dismembering the Burman Empire, but that it is not unlikely that we shall find it necessary for the purpose of avoiding further aggression and insult to take up some strong positions upon their coast and frontier. Take occasion upon all opportunities that may offer to assure the Sianese of our friendship, and that they have nothing to apprehend but what is advantageous from the result of the present contest.

Endeavour cautiously to ascertain what claims the Siamese still make to the provinces of Mergui and Tavoy, which were wrested from them by the Burmans about 60 years ago, and whether they are anxious or otherwise to repossess them. Say to them if they are, that they ought to communicate their wishes to the Governor General of India without loss of time.

Ascertain whether or not the Siamese are disposed to attack the Burmans on their northern frontier, in what manner and in what particular quarter.

Should the Siamese be disposed to co-operate with us, and enter into a correspondence with our Commanders at Mergui, Tavoy, or elsewhere, you may offer yourself as the medium of explanation if they desire it, for which purpose I furnish you with a letter of introduction to Sir A. Campbell, Major Canning and the Officer Commanding at Mergui or Tavoy.

Pray communicate with me by every opportunity, or with the Governor of Prince of Wales Island, should a fit occasion offer, and in your narrative give as far as you can the *literal dialogue* which takes place between yourself and the person you are conversing with, this being the most satisfactory and au-

thentic form in which any statements can be rendered.

(Signed) J. CRAWFORD.

Singapore

5th October 1824.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 35

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

Secry. to the Government

Poll. Dept.

Fort William.

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Honble. the Governor General in Council that an Arab vessel, which arrived last night from one of the Malay States on the confines of Siam, reports the death of the King of that country, and in a manner so circumstantial as to entitle the account to some credit. It is affirmed that Prince Krom Chiat, the eldest illegitimate son of the King, has been enabled by the strength of the faction of which he is at the head to seize upon the Crown, in opposition to the rights of the young Prince Chao Fa, the King's eldest son by the favourite Queen, and who appears to have been destined by his father for the throne.

The Prince Krom Chiat is the same individual who has been long at the head of the Foreign Department of the Siamese Government. I had several interviews with him while in that country, and from what

I had an opportunity of observing, he appeared a person of much intelligence and energy.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD

Resident.

Singapore

7th October 1824.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 36.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.
Secretary in the Secret
and Political Department &ca. &ca. &ca.
Calcutta.

Sir,

• • • • •

. . . The Mayhoon of Tavoy now in office there on hearing that the Governor of Mergui intended defence, sent to Lt. Col. Miles to say that he was ready and willing to aid him, if required, by 500 Tavoyans, and that he would proceed with them by a back water, while the British troops went by sea; his offer was of course rejected but he sent his son with the Lt. Col. to be of any service to him he could.

All accounts agree in stating those provinces to be superior to any thing we have as yet seen. The Harbour of Mergui is excellent, grain at Tavoy and cattle of Mergui in abundance.

I have &c.

(Signed) A. CAMPBELL,
Brigr. General.

Head Quarters, Rangoon
the 23rd October 1824.

P.S. Of the Siamese I know nothing to be depended on. The Prince Sewarrady, (? Swetrachatr) in his instructions to the Governors of the maritime towns, tells them to be on their guard as he understands four thousand of the Siamese are on the march in hostility against the Burmese. I also understand that since the fall of Tavoy a reconnoitring party of that nation appeared in the vicinity of the three Pagodas (Gibson's map) and on seeing a British Jack (given for that purpose) flying within the Burmese boundary, instantly retired.

(Signed) A. C.

Bengal Secret
Consultations,
vol. 362.

FORT WILLIAM 19th November 1824.

No. 46.

To the Resident at Singapore.

Sir,

* * * * *

* See copies from
Straits Settlements,
vol. 99.

In dispatches this day addressed to the Governor of Prince of Wales Island and Br. Genl. Sir A. Campbell* the Governor General in Council has had occasion to state at some length his present views and impressions regarding the disposal of Tavoy and Mergui; and the agreements and exchanges which it might be desirable to effect with the Siamese. Copies of the above are herewith transmitted for your information and little remains to be stated to yourself personally beyond the expression of the high sense entertained by Government of the value of the communications contained in your letters now under consideration and an acknowledgement of the very material assistance which they have afforded to its late deliberations.

* * * * *

The tenor of your official communications to the Siamese Ministers and your instructions to Mr. Gillies on his proceeding to Bangkok in

a commercial character are considered to be very judicious and appropriate. His Lordship in Council approves also the encouragement afforded by you to the conveyance of arms and military stores to Siam, in the course of commercial transactions, and sanctions the present which you recently made to the King in the name of the Governor General of 1,000 stand of muskets. It had been in the contemplation of Government to transmit to you a quantity of arms to be so used, and the step which you have taken therefore is merely a judicious anticipation of the wishes and intentions of the Governor General in Council.

The report of the death of the King of Siam, and the accession of Kroma Chiat, communicated by your last dispatch, has been noticed with much interest, and Government will look forward with anxiety for further more authentic intelligence.

• • • • •

I have &c.

(Signed) G. SWINTON

Secy. to Govt.

Fort William

19th Novr. 1824.

Bengal Despatches,
vol. 99,
pp. 453-172.

Bengal
Political Department.

OUR GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL
at FORT WILLIAM
in BENGAL.

• • • • •

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|---|---|--------|
| 1. <i>See Bengal Letters Received, vol. 86.</i> | Answer to 2d Letter dated 23d November 1821. ¹ | |
| 2. <i>See ditto, vol. 87.</i> | Letter dated 26th January ² | } 1822 |
| 3. <i>Not copied—contains no new matter.</i> | Letter dated 27th December ³ | |

Para. 104. These Letters, to which we shall reply in conjunction with your Letter in this Department dated the 18th of July 1823,⁴ relate chiefly to the Mission of Mr. Crawford of your Medical Establishment to the Kingdoms of Siam and Cochin China, on which subject we have received several Letters from the Government of Prince of Wales Island.

4. *See Bengal Letters Received, vol. 90.*

105. The principal object of this Mission appears to have been to establish an improved commercial intercourse with these Kingdoms, by obtaining the removal of the vexatious imposts and inquisitions to which the trade has hitherto been subjected, and thus eventually to benefit the manufacturing and trading interests of Great Britain.

106. In addition to this primary object of the Mission, you considered that a good opportunity would thereby be afforded for the friendly interference of the British Government, with the Court of Siam, in favour of its feudatory, our Ally, the Rajah of Queda, from whom we obtained Prince of Wales Island and the Territory we possess on the Malayan Peninsula.

107. When in the year 1820, you acquiesced in the proposal of the Government of Prince of Wales' Island to depute a Commercial Agent to the Court of Siam, you very properly directed that the utmost caution should be used, in order that the jealousy and mistrust of the Siamese Court might not be excited, and that Government, in deference to your Counsel, instead of deputing a Public Officer, employed a Merchant (Mr. Morgan), then about to proceed to Siam, to obtain intelligence respecting the Court, the manners of the People, and the Commerce of the Country.

108. We were, therefore, not prepared to hear that, without awaiting the return of Mr. Morgan, Mr. Crawford, a Medical Servant of the Company, had been deputed in the character of an accredited Agent of the Governor General to Siam and Cochin China, accompanied by a Surveyor, Naturalist and Sepoy-Guard, in short with a retinue, which it

appears to us was calculated to arouse the jealousy which you had before stated you were so very anxious to avoid exciting.

* See Bengal Pol.
Cons. Range 123
vol. 36.

109. At the Court of Siam Mr. Crawford appears to have totally failed in all the objects of his Mission ; which, in his Report of the 3rd April 1823, * he attributes chiefly to the supposed interests of the Government, and the unquestionable interests of the Public Officers of the State in upholding the present system of Commerce ; partly to the occurrences in Queda, and the refusal of the Government of Prince of Wales Island to surrender the Rajah, and partly to the circumstance of the Siamese Government having been refused permission to purchase Fire-Arms at British Settlements pending the war between the Siamese and Burmese.

110. We doubt not that these causes may have contributed in a great degree to the ill success of the Mission, and we think it not improbable that their operation was aided by the enquiries instituted by Mr. Crawford regarding the political condition and resources of the Nation, and the Surveys which were executed during his stay in Siam.

111. Mr. Crawford has proposed, as a substitute for a direct trade with that Country, the establishment of a Commercial Emporium

on the Si-Chang Islands at the head of the Gulph of Siam ; but we do not consider it expedient to entertain this proposition at present.

112. At the Court of Cochin China Mr. Crawford appears to have been more successful, having obtained permission for the unrestricted resort of British vessels to most of the Ports of the Empire (which it seems however would not have been denied had no Mission taken place) and ascertained that commerce may be there carried on without any vexatious interference on the part of the Sovereign or his Officers, and without being subjected to oppressive or unreasonable duties.

113. Upon the whole we concur with you in the commendation which you have passed upon the zeal and talents exhibited by Mr. Crawford in the execution of the duties which you assigned to him, and we consider the report which he has furnished respecting the commercial resources and political condition of the countries which he visited as constituting a valuable addition to the information which we previously possessed upon those interesting subjects. We are also not without hope that the knowledge which he acquired of the state of parties at Siam, of the disposition of the Court, and of the habits and customs of the people, may, in his present situation of Resident at Singapore, enable him

to improve any favourable opportunities which may arise for procuring the extension to British traders of the facilities which are now enjoyed by the Chinese.

114. We approve the publication of such portion of Mr. Crawford's Report as relates to the Commerce of Cochin China, and the Tariff of duties which was furnished to that gentleman, for the information of the Mercantile Community.

115. We have learned with regret that the Rajah of Queda has been driven from his dominions by the Siamese Authorities, and had taken refuge at Penang, where he was very properly afforded an asylum, and a suitable allowance for his maintenance. The Government of Penang acting under your instructions, very properly avoided giving any cause of offence on this occasion to the Siamese Government.

* * * * *

We are

Your affectionate Friends,

(Signed) W. ASTELL

&c. &c. &c.

London

the 6 April 1825.

Extracts relating to the Storm episode.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 29.

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No. 6.

To G. SWINTON Esqre.

Secretary to the Government,

FORT WILLIAM.

Sir,

Mr. Storm the Supra Cargo of the Brig Phoenix having submitted to the Government a complaint of ill usage by the Siamese Government, sustained by himself and the Commander of that vessel, I am directed by the Honble. the Governor in Council to transmit copies of the documents relative thereto for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General in Council, to which Authority Mr. Storm has been referred, as he is about to proceed to Bengal and this Government does not under existing circumstances consider itself at liberty to call on the Siamese Court for any explanation on the subject.

I have &c.

(Signed) W. S. CRACROFT

Actg. Secy. to Govt.

Fort Cornwallis

the 5th December 1822.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 27.

FORT WILLIAM 15th January 1823.

No. 16.

To Mr. CRAWFURD.

To J. CRAWFURD Esqre.

&ca. &ca. &ca.

Sir,

I am directed to transmit to you the enclosed original dispatches received from Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, and the Secretary to the Government of Prince of Wales's Island relative to the complaints of ill usage experienced by Mr. Storm, the Supra Cargo, and Captain Smith Commander of the Brig Phoenix at the hands of the Government of Siam, and to desire that you will be pleased to submit any further information on the subject, and any observations which your experience of the character and conduct of the Siamese authorities and usages of the country may enable you to state in elucidation of the transaction in question.

I have &ca.

(Sd.) G. SWINTON

Secretary to the Government.

Council Chamber

15th January 1823.

Bengal Political
Consultations.
Range 123, vol. 29.

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No. 5.

Mr. CRAWFURD

(Service)

Poll. Dept. To GEORGE SWINTON Esqre.
Secretary to the Government.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant transmitting original despatches from Sir T. S. Raffles and the Secretary to the Government of Prince of Wales's Island, relating to a complaint of ill usage experienced by Mr. Storm, the Supra Cargo, and Captain Smith, Commander of the Brig Phoenix, and directing me to submit such further explanation respecting the transaction in question as it was in my power to give.

2. In regard to specific information respecting the circumstances of the transaction itself, I have nothing to add, my knowledge having indeed been derived from the same source as the Statements laid before Government. I have no doubt however judging from the well known character of the Siamese in general, and in particular of the individuals who were guilty of the outrage on the persons of these gentlemen, that the written account of

Mr. Storm, is essentially correct and candid. While I admit however the unjustifiable and unmanly character of the outrage committed by the Siamese, it is not to be denied but that the conduct of Messrs. Storm and Smith in destroying a horse in the vicinity of the palace, an action however seemingly unimportant in itself, was indiscreet or inconsiderate, and could not but be looked upon by the Siamese, if not as an insult to their Sovereign, at least as a Signal one to their religion. To render this intelligible I must observe that the Siamese are strict followers of the worship of Buddha and of the doctrines of the metempsychosis, and that consequently their religion strictly inhibits the destruction of the lives of all animals and especially of the larger animals. This is carried so rigidly into practice that in the river Me-nam within a certain distance of the palace, it is even held unlawful to fish. While I make this Statement I feel perfectly assured than the act of Messrs. Storm and Smith, whose conduct during the whole of my experience of them at Siam, was marked by great temperance and forbearance in their intercourse with the natives, arose from momentary inadvertence and was altogether unpremeditated. I am not even prepared to deny but that the Siamese may have been less anxious upon this occasion to vindicate their religion than to make use of the affront offered to it as a pretext for the outrage which they committed. I am

fully convinced at the same time from all the circumstances of the case, that no intention existed of offering any affront to our Government, as had this been the case, many more obvious and decided means of marking their intention lay in their power.

3. I am prepared to vouch for the accuracy of the statement made by Mr. Storm in his letter to the Resident of Singapore, respecting the conduct pursued towards himself and Captain Smith in their commercial transactions by the Officers of the Siamese Court. Nothing indeed could be more unfair or more illiberal. It was the very conduct pursued towards these gentlemen which put me upon my guard in my negotiations with the Court against the promises of liberal conduct in their future commercial intercourse with us, which its Officers were but too ready to make.

4. In the same letter of Mr. Storm to the Resident of Singapore, there are two Charges made against the Siamese Government, one for Kidnapping Slaves from the Port of Calcutta,—and the others for the maltreatment of lascars taken away by a Ship of the King of Siam from the same place. I have the best reasons for believing that these Statements are perfectly accurate. The slaves alluded to were seen almost daily by every individual belonging to the Mission, and there are, I believe,

now in Calcutta, persons who sailed in the King of Siam's ship, who can depose as to the manner in which the slaves alluded to were kidnapped. From the enquiries which I made while at Siam the practice of Kidnapping slaves does not seem to be confined to the instances now brought forward. The Siamese Government, while it strictly prohibits its own Subjects from leaving the country even for legitimate purposes, encourages the importation of Slaves from every quarter. The Foreign Minister has now a number of Slaves who were kidnapped from the island of Java. These persons were Subjects of the Netherlands Government, and their seizure was made a Subject of remonstrance by the Dutch Commissioner who went to Siam in 1819.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

Calcutta

29th January 1823.

Factory Records, FORT CORNWALLIS the 28 November 1822.
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, pp. 241-2.

To W. A. CLUBLEY Esquire,

Mr. W. Storm

Secretary to Government at P. W. Island.

14 Nov. 1822.

Sir,

The uncertainty of my touching at your Island induces me to forward the enclosed letters, and as I only arrived this morning, I am unable to send a copy [of] the outrage committed by the Siamese Government upon Captain Smith and me, but as Mr. Thomson, a passenger for Bengal by the Wellington, has a copy I hope he will have the kindness to forward it to you.

I have &c.

(Signed) W. STORM.

Singapore

14 November 1822.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, pp. 293-307.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 12 December 1822.

MR. W. STORM.

Mr. Storm
1 Decr. 1822.

To W. A. CLUBLEY Esquire
Secretary to Government
Prince of Wales Island.

Sir,

I beg leave to make known to you, for the information of the Honble. the Governor, the barbarous treatment which Captain Smith and I experienced in Siam.

The enclosed will convey but a faint idea of our sufferings, but it may be sufficient to deter others from placing themselves in the power of so deceitful a race.

We sailed from Bengal in the Brig Phoenix in February last, and arrived at Bangkok in early part of May.

As the Mission of the Governor General was there at the time we hoped to derive some advantage from that circumstance, but unfortunately we did not find it the case, notwithstanding Mr. Crawford's exertions in our favor, for the Court seemed to take a pleasure in

throwing obstructions in the way of the disposal of our cargo, and we were in consequence obliged to bring back a considerable quantity of goods which remained unsold.

The advantages we might however have ultimately overcome, but Captain McDonnell had unwarrantably and contrary to his Charter Party introduced a cargo of upwards of 60,000 Dollars worth of goods in the Embassy Ship John Adam, and as they were not subject to the usual charges of freight and other expenses, the Company paying all these, and as the principal part of his cargo was on commission and received at Penang and Singapore, he was enabled to sell at prices which could never pay the merchant though it might answer his purpose at the time.

I have &c.

(Signed) W. STORM.

Ship John Adam

1 Decr. 1822.

Enclosure 1.— An Account of an Outrage which took place
in Siam in 1822.

In consequence of a message received from the (1) Prince Kroma Mūn Chiat, we proceeded about 1 o'clock p.m. on Saturday, 19 October 1822, to his Palace, where on our arrival we were treated with more than usual attention.

After waiting a considerable time, a conversation took place respecting our having fire arms, when we assured them we had none. They, however, were not satisfied, and insisted upon searching us when we rose to go away (2).

The court yard had been gradually filled and now seemed crowded with people (3), and our getting up seemed to be the signal for a general attack, for numbers immediately rushed forward and struck at and separated us in an instant.

(1). The eldest, but natural son of the King's. He is at the head of the Commercial and some other Departments.

(2) We had been twice in the Palace before, and knew it never had been required of either European or American. We were therefore surely not wrong in saying "we would not be searched"—and they never attempted it by force.

(3). About 5 or 600 soldiers were said to have been inside the walls on this occasion.

Captain Smith was carried into the court yard, where he defended himself for some time, but it was impossible to contend long with such fearful odds, for they soon overpowered him, and pulling him to the ground, kicked him backwards and forwards until he became insensible.

When the attack first commenced, I was unwilling to believe it intended, and fell back into the place where we had just been sitting, but it was no longer sacred, for they followed till I reached the wall, when placing myself on the defensive, I kept the crowd for some time at bay. It was however impossible to resist such an attack for any length of time, when seizing my legs and arms they dragged me to the ground and in this manner carried me backwards and forwards.

I was now unable to offer any further resistance and they availed themselves of it, for hands, feet and elbows came upon me in every direction, while my hands and feet were pulled and twisted so painfully as to leave no hope of getting out of their hands alive.

Finding however that I did not fall under this barbarous treatment, they attempted once or twice by placing their knees in my back to break it, but not succeeding they seized

my neckcloth, and pulling it with all their might nearly strangled me.

Early in the attack the bridge of my nose had been broken, and so rapidly did the blood accumulate in my throat that while they were dragging me backwards and forwards I was often nearly choked.

During the whole of this time the Prince, the (4) Prah Klang, the Rajah of Ligor and many others of the first rank stood looking on, enjoying the scene, but at length being satiated, and seeing probably that I must soon sink under their cruelty if pushed much further, I was placed on the floor, and pulling or rather wrenching my arms back, they placed on my ankles two pair of irons weighing about 20 lbs.

I now for the first time recognized Captain Smith at some distance, having irons put upon him also. He appeared to have suffered as much as I had. We were both bleeding profusely and so beaten and bruised as to be hardly able to move.

The Prah Klang, accompanied by several Rajahs of high rank, then made his appearance,

(4). A relation of the King's and has the immediate management of the shipping under the Prince.

and exulting seemingly in our sufferings told us "that we had now seen what the Siamese Tomasha was"—while the Talow [ta'alluk] sent a message to Captain Smith to say "That he understood the English thought the Siamese were afraid of them but he hoped we were now convinced that they were not."

We were then asked some questions respecting a (5) horse which the King was said to have returned to us after keeping him six months, and which from our having neither room nor provisions for, we were under the

(5) We had brought as a present to the King a white horse. He was much pleased with him, and a few days before he was returned had been placed next to himself but one in his annual procession round his Palace. He had been in his possession for nearly six months, yet notwithstanding he was returned within three or four days of our intended departure. This measure we conceived unknown to the King, and done with the view of the Prah Klang and some of the others putting the present usually given in return into their own pockets. They expected us no doubt to go upon all fours to entreat them to take him back. This we were not exactly disposed to do and having neither room nor provisions of any kind for the poor animal we were under the painful necessity of ordering him to be killed. Their returning him was an insult but we had the countenance of the other Europeans in Bangkok at the time and even the Knockiedbars [Nakhoda] justified our conduct to the Prah Klang, indeed one of them spoke so boldly on the occasion that he answered to a question who he was and what territory his Master (the Imaum of Mascat) had, that he is a friend of the English, that he is what he is, and such as he is I am his servant.

necessity of killing, and as he then became our own property again we thought we had a right to do with him what we pleased. We then complained of their conduct to us—that we had been in their country for six months, and during the whole of the time they knew that we had not only always conducted ourselves without blame, but even to their satisfaction; that we had paid them upwards of 10,000 (6) Ticals in duties and charges which they had admitted was more than any other Ship had ever paid them and it was cruel after such general good conduct on our part to have been so barbarously used.

To this appeal we got no satisfactory reply, and soon after were told to retire to a place which had been prepared for us. Here we found only a straw mat spread upon the ground and a leather pillow, but fortunately they afterwards allowed us to add to it the bedding from my sampan. The place was only about 15 feet long by 10 broad, and our guard, consisting of 10 or 12 men, remained constantly with us.

The four Lascars who had accompanied us into the Palace were also severely beaten and two of them who happened to have their usual Lascar knives had besides the two pair of irons,

(6) 6,154 Spanish Dollars.

an iron collar put round their necks and then chained to the wall.

The whole business appears to have been previously arranged, for immediately after we had left the brig, two armed junks dropped down alongside of her, while several boats having each a gun mounted and carrying a number of armed soldiers continued to row night and day alongside of our and Captain McDonnell's brig. Several houses also near the shipping were filled with soldiers.

Several Rajahs came to us on the following afternoon (Sunday) to tell us, as they said, our faults, and that they would write to the Rajah of Penang on the subject. They then proceeded to read—"That we had killed a
 "horse in the King's boat—that we had said
 "that we would have killed it before the Prah-
 "Klang—that two of the Lascars (7) had
 "knives when they entered the Palace which
 "was contrary to the custom of Siam—that we
 "were indebted to the Prah-Klang for not
 "having been beaten to death—that we had
 "refused to be searched, and that and killing
 "the horse were two great faults in Siam—
 "that if a Siamese had done it he would have
 "been put to death, but that the Prince out

(7) They had done so twice before at least.

“ of his great friendship for the Rajahs of
 “ Bengal and Penang had forgiven us—that
 “ our brig (8) must immediately proceed to
 “ Paknam (9)—that our guns could not be
 “ returned to us for fear we should attack some
 “ of their vessels outside, but that they would
 “ be sent after us, and that we should be sent
 “ down to Paknam in one of the King’s boats.”

Here we ventured to make a few remarks in our own favor, and to request some alterations in their plans, but were told the case had already been decided on by these great men of the Empire, that no alteration whatever could take place afterwards—so that we were punished first and afterwards tried and found guilty without being allowed to make any defence or even be present.

It was then asserted that I had been the first aggressor in striking the head *Chokidar*, [watchman] but after waiting upwards of half an hour they were content to abandon it—a most convincing proof of their own guilt.

We had been advised on Saturday night to write a letter (No. 1*) to the Prince, but so afraid do they appear to have been at what

• See *infra*.

(8) The Phoenix of Calcutta.

(9) A village near the mouth of the river.

* *See infra.*

they had done that we were forgiven before they knew the contents of it. On Tuesday it was returned to us and they then dictated No. 2* in which they allow us [to] retain the same paragraph stating our good conduct during the six months we had been in their country. With such a testimony as this, and at a time when we were their prisoners, and in irons, surely we need no other to prove we could have done no wrong, and that it was for no act of our own that we had been subjected to such barbarous usage.

Our brig was unable to proceed down the river on Tuesday, and I take this opportunity of saying that we are much indebted to Captain McDonnell for the assistance he gave both in men and boats.

The following day having been fixed for our liberation we looked forward to it with the utmost anxiety. In the early part of it the Mussulman whom we had carried with us from Bengal and through whom the principal part of our cargo had been sold made his appearance, accompanied by two of the crannies, or Court Writers, who told us that he would not be permitted to return with us, as he was required for the King's ship. As the man himself was unwilling to remain, and his services almost absolutely necessary to us, we remonstrated strongly against this arbitrary act, but all in vain.

The whole of our accounts were now to settle with him, but they hurried us in the most shameful manner, and would not allow us to speak one word to him but in their hearing, and from the shortness of the period having been unable to collect the whole of our debts, we were compelled to leave a considerable sum to be recovered by him.

The irons of the Lascars had already been knocked off, and they now proceeded to remove ours, which from the hardness of the iron or their awkwardness was effected with difficulty and pain.

After visiting the Prah Klang, who was in the Palace, we were permitted to depart after having been four days in confinement without advice or assistance, though suffering severely from the bruises and wounds we had received.

It would however be the height of ingratitude if I omitted to mention the extraordinary kindness of Chow Crom, a nobleman in the Prince's service, with whom I was on terms of the greatest intimacy. His influence in the Palace procured the admission of articles which were prohibited, and that respect from our guards which saved us from insult. He strained every nerve to obtain our release, and besides visiting us often himself, he sent his

young son who was much attached to me to remain with us, while two of his servants were in constant attendance.

As a contrast to this, I regret to say that Senr. Carlos Ml. de Silveiro, a Brazilian by birth, and assuming the title of Portuguese Consul at Siam, acted very differently. His favors we did not want, but it appears he was consulted previous to the outrage upon us, when he declared that the British Government would never take any notice of whatever acts of violence or injustice they might think proper to commit upon us.

It was night when we reached Paknam, and here we were told that if we would leave our long boat, our guns would be sent out to us after we got over the bar. But our men we could not spare, and our boat was absolutely necessary to enable us to get out. We however offered to pay any sum they pleased if they would send them to us, but with this they would not comply.

Our linguist left us on Thursday morning, when we got under weigh, promising to return with a pilot, but as he never came back and had told our gunner in Bangkok that we should neither get our guns nor a pilot, it would seem as if the Siamese were desirous in addition to their ill usage that we should lose our vessel.

Feeling however that we were not safe while within reach of such a treacherous race, we endeavoured to make the best of our way but unfortunately on Friday morning 25 October we took the ground, and owing to the spring tide not rising sufficiently we did not get over the bar till the 1st of November when we proceeded on our voyage.

(Signed) W. STORM.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, p. 307.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 12 Dec. 1822.

(No. 1—Copy.)

To the PRINCE KROM MŪN CHET.

May it please your Royal Highness

We are strangers, and came to your country for the purpose of trade, and during the six months we have now been here, there is no man who can find fault with us.

If we have done wrong now, it is from ignorance of your customs, and as we are sorry for it we hope you will allow us [to] go on board of [our] ship, as we are very ill and must certainly die if kept here any longer.

We are &c.

(Signed) W. STORM

CHAS. E. SMITH.

Bangkok

19 October 1822.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 87, pp. 308-9.

FORT CORNWALLIS the 12 Dec. 1822.

(No. 2 Copy.)

To His Royal Highness

The PRINCE KROMA MŪN CHET.

May it please your Royal Highness

We are strangers and came to your country for the purpose of trade, and during the six months we have now been here, there is no man who can find fault with us.

We brought a horse as a present to the King, which we understood from the (1) horse keeper was to be returned, and we told him "to do so" and when it came alongside of the ship we were angry and ordered it to be killed in the boat in the presence of the horse keeper, but we since understand it is a crime according to the laws of your country, and are therefore sorry for it.

That when you sent for us, the *Chokeedars* were afraid we had arms, and wished to search

1) It was the writers who have the settlement of all the duties, charges &c. on the ship who told us, but the horse keeper whom we had not seen appears to have been brought forward to screen them.

(Sd.) W. S.

us, which we objected to, and wished to go away, upon which a quarrel ensued, and upon trying to force our way, they beat us. That if we have therefore not obeyed your laws we hope you will forgive us for both these faults, and allow us [to] go on board ship again, as we are so very ill that we must die if kept any longer in confinement.

We are &ca.

(Signed) W. STORM

CHAS. E. SMITH.

Bangkok

19 October 1822.

As Mr. Storm was about to proceed to Bengal THE SECRETARY reports that he was referred to the Most Noble the Governor General in Council as the Supreme Authority in matters of a political nature, and that copies of the above documents were forwarded.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 29,

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No. 2,

To The Honorable

SIR T. S. RAFFLES KT.

Lieutenant Governor.

Honble. Sir,

I herewith beg leave to transmit for your
 • *See infra.* information a letter of yesterday's date* addressed to me by Mr. Storm Supercargo of the Brig Phoenix with enclosures relative to the very shameful and most barbarous usage himself and Captain Smith, Commander of the Vessel, appear to have experienced at the hands of the Siamese Government.

It will of course be for yourself and the higher authorities to judge of the measures which may be deemed most expedient to pursue on this occasion, it appears to me however, that the insult was intended to be offered more to the British Government than to the unfortunate sufferers themselves.

I have &c.

(Signed) WM. FARQUHAR

Resident.

Singapore

15th November 1822.

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No. 9, Contd.

TO COLONEL FARQUHAR

Resident &ca. Singapore.

Sir,

1. It becomes my painful duty to make known to you the barbarous treatment Captain Smith and I experienced in Siam in the hope that its publicity may at least deter others from putting themselves in the power of a Government so truly infamous as their conduct to us must always rank them.

2. We arrived in Siam in May last with a cargo well suited to the market and consisting of such a variety of goods as had never been taken there before.

3. On our arrival we had a great many fair promises, made us by the Court but unfortunately all their favors ended there. Indeed they seemed to take a pleasure in throwing obstacles in the way of the sale of our goods for they would neither buy themselves nor let any body else. In this state they continued so long that we had serious intentions of leaving the Port when they then came forward and purchased a few articles

some of which we were afterwards obliged to let them have at a less price than they bought them for, and others they only took away a week or so before our departure.

4. Our samples they also kept an unreasonable length of time and would neither return them nor buy them, though we could have repeatedly sold them to others, by which means when we did get them back the sale was gone by and they were thrown upon our hands. Again when they gave us liberty to sell they gave orders at the same time to the Chokeedars not to permit any body to purchase. This we detected but complaint was useless, for no man in Siam dare tell his superior any thing which is disagreeable nor one servant of the Court complain against another. Even when we did sell we were not then certain we were doing right, for if an article reached the Court through the bazaar and happened to be liked all the buyers were called upon to give up their purchases, and if this was impracticable they were fined or flogged and imprisoned. Such unjust and arbitrary conduct as this rendered it impossible to dispose in a reasonable time of a cargo of any amount and as Captain McDonnell had most unjustifiably brought in the Embassy Ship goods to the amount of upwards of 60,000 Dollars worth we were compelled to sell at very low prices.

5. The King of Siam has a ship which was sent last year to Calcutta and carried back five slaves purchased there and a number of Lascars, British Subjects. All British ships are obliged to enter into a bond to return such Lascars as they take away, and it seems strange that a foreign Power should have advantages in our ports which we have not ourselves.

6. The slaves could not have been taken away with the knowledge of Government but the Lascars were obtained through the Registry office, for we are in possession of their tickets.

7. This ship returned to Siam while we were there and all the Lascars were turned adrift and with difficulty obtained their wages. Some of them entered with us—a few with Captain McDonnell and others were taken by the Knoekedhar [Nakhoda] of a ship belonging to the Imaum of Muscat. This was all very well as long as the King of Siam did not want them, but just before we came away they had come to the determination of sending their ship to Ceylon and Bombay. Accordingly a demand was made to deliver them up, or have them taken by force, while the Arab Knoekedhar was threatened if he did not comply to be put in irons.

8. These threats had not however the desired effect, but our refusal to deliver them up enraged the Prah-Klang beyond all bounds.

and he gave orders that we should not have a passport till we complied.

I have also to complain that several letters for me, having I believe enclosures for the Government put under charge of one of the linguists by Mr. Crawford and the other gentlemen of the Mission, were detained and opened by the Prab-Klang and by his orders translated by a Portuguese priest. This flagrant act is so well known in Siam that latterly no person pretended even to say that it was not the case.

The enclosures contain some account of their treatment of Captain Smith and myself. You will see how infamously we have been used, and how near we were of falling a sacrifice to their barbarity. The effects of it I shall probably never get over, for I have been exceedingly ill ever since.

I know not what view the Government of India may be disposed to take of the subject, but as the Court of Siam charge British ships higher duties and port charges (1) than they

(1) The Port charges amounted to 1,499 ticals 3 minims [salüng] 1 prang [fuang], but they refused to give, as is customary, the particulars. A Brig pays only half Port charges and the usual sum is 1,000 or 1,050 ticals or 500 Dollars, while we paid 749½ Dollars; a charge so unreasonable that it can only be attributed to a desire to avoid any commerce with the British.

do any other Power and shew less favor to them in their dealings it seems but fair that some measure of retaliation at least should be adopted with regard to their ships and junks frequenting our ports.

I have &ca.

(Signed) WM. STORM.

Brig Phoenix
Singapore Roads
14th Novr. 1822.

P.S. The detention against his own will of our Mussulman Mollim is an act of the greatest injustice. He had been employed by us in the sale of the principal part of our cargo and independent of the risk we run of never getting the money left with him to collect, we were deprived of his services at a time when we needed them most.

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No 9 Contd.

AN ACCOUNT of an outrage which took
place in Siam in 1822.

About 1 o'clock p.m. on Saturday the 19th October 1822 the Christian Captain of the Port (1) came on board the Brig Phoenix of Calcutta and told us that the Prince Krom Mian Chet (2) wished to see us, immediately upon which we hurried away in my sampan accompanied by our Mussulman linguist and the Port Captain following in his own boat.

The part of the palace in which the Prince resides is situated on the right bank of the river Me-nam, about 2 miles above the shipping. The entrance is filthy and through a bazar. It is a square building surrounded with high walls and has two gates. Adjoining to the Audience Hall there is a place open in front where all visitors are obliged to wait till it is the pleasure of his Royal Highness to see them. Here we had remained some time when we expressed to our linguist, and particularly

(1) A native Portuguese.

(2) A son of the King's, who has charge of the Commercial Department, &c.

mentioned to him then as well as formerly in the boat, that we had hurried away upon the assurance of not being detained when our dinner was almost ready to be placed upon the table, and that we should not wait too long but go away and return some other time. To this he did not tell us we could not go away nor make any observation which could lead us to form any idea of our being under restraint.

The Court yard now seemed to be rapidly filling with people, but as our linguist stated it was usual, it did away with our suspicions for the moment ; but observing the crowd still increasing, the strictness of the door-keepers in preventing any person going out and a sword or two occasionally carried into the Palace, I became uneasy and said, if the Prince was not likely to come out soon we must go away. Upon which we were told he had come out and would see us in a few minutes. A conversation then took place between Captain Smith and the Port Captain respecting our having fire arms, when we assured him we had no such thing, and indeed he must have known it himself, for we came away from the Brig so hurriedly as not to have allowed ourselves sufficient time to make any change in our dress or even to go into our cabins. We then said we had been twice there before without any search having been required and it seemed

strange they should now wish to adopt a measure so obnoxious. Captain Smith then said they insisted upon searching us and therefore we had better go away, upon which we both got up. This moment appeared to be the signal of attack for we were immediately struck and surrounded by such numbers as to preclude any hope of escape, or of resistance being of the slightest use ; but the human mind is not easily subdued and in the midst of the greatest dangers it resists insult and oppression. Accordingly Captain Smith defended himself for some time in the Court Yard where he had been carried, while I retreated with my back to the wall to the same place where we had been sitting only a moment before. Here I defended myself for some time against their brutal attack, but at length was overpowered, when seizing my legs and arms they twisted them in the most painful manner, at the same time carrying me backwards and forwards, sometime with my face down, at others up. During the whole of the time they continued to beat me with both hands and feet in the most inhuman manner, and once or twice attempted to break my back by placing their knees in it. They then seized my neckcloth which they twisted in such a manner as to induce me to believe they intended to strangle me, and afterwards to leave so much pain as to render me unable to eat with comfort for some time.

In the early part of the scuffle I received a blow on the nose which broke the bridge, and from the position I was in when they were carrying me the blood collected so fast in my throat that I was often nearly choked, for I could neither swallow nor throw it out.

Having at length satisfied themselves in their brutal attack they placed me on the floor and pulling or rather wrenching my arms back they put two pair of irons on my ankles weighing about twenty pounds.

While this operation was going on I observed Captain Smith for the first time in the same situation, after having suffered severely, and been thrown down and kicked forwards and backwards till he was for some time insensible. It was however difficult to say which had suffered most, but our eyes seemed to have been their principal aim for we were both much disfigured then and Captain Smith had a cut on the forehead. Both our watches and caps had been torn from us, but Captain Smith recovered his almost immediately while I did not get my watch for 3 days afterwards and my cap and knife were never returned. Nothing could exceed the barbarity with which we were used. Hands, feet and elbows were all employed without mercy. Death would have been preferable to what we suffered, and no entreaties could move them to desist.

The Prah Klang now made his appearance accompanied by several Rajahs of high rank and told us while bruised and bleeding and loaded with irons that we had "now seen what a Siamese Tomasha was." This man's conduct had always been bad but upon the present occasion it was brutal in the extreme for he seemed to exult in our distress.

The Taloon (4) also sent a message to Captain Smith "that he understood the English "thought the Siamese were afraid of them but "he hoped we were now convinced they were "not." Pretty convincing proof indeed when about 500 or 600 men were thought necessary to attack two defenceless men who had neither means of escape nor resistance against such an overwhelming force.

They then proceeded to enquire into the cause of our killing a horse which the King had returned to us, when we answered that it was our own property and we thought we had a right to do with it as we liked. We then complained of their outrage upon us and stated that we had been in their country for six months, that we had paid them upwards of ten thousand ticals in duties and charges, which was more than any one ship had done before,

(4) An officer connected with the shipping.

and that it was hard within a few days of our intended departure to be so ill used. We however got no satisfactory answer and were told afterwards that Raasday, the Mussulman Cran-
ni, who was the interpreter, did not communi-
cate all we said.

We were then desired to withdraw to a shade near the gate, which had been prepared for us, but our bones would have suffered more than they did, and they suffered enough, if the bedding of my sampan had not been fortunately brought unto us.

The four Lascars who had in the absence of my boatmen accompanied us were also severely beaten and two of them who had their usual knives with them had, in addition to the two pair of irons on their legs, a collar round their necks and were fastened to the wall with a chain.

The whole business appears to have been previously arranged, for immediately after we left the brig two armed junks dropped down alongside of us and several gun boats, having each a gun mounted and carrying a number of armed soldiers, continued to row alongside of us, and Captain McDonnell's brig,* for Portu-
guese linguist were also put on board who were obliged to answer the boats as they hailed while the houses in front of the Prah-Klang

(*There appears to
be an omission here.)

and his brother were filled with armed men. A message was also sent on board that if they kept quiet and no body left the vessel no harm would be done to them.

We were also told that Senhor Carlos M. de Silveiro, who assumes the title of Portuguese Consul, had been consulted by the Prah Klang and that he gave it as his opinion [that they] might proceed to these extremities with us in perfect safety, for that our Government would never take any notice of it.

About two hours after we had been put in confinement we were visited by my friend Chou Croom, a Siamese of rank, and from his being at the head of the Establishment of the Prince, we were supplied with comfort and treated with attention by our guards, which we could not have expected otherwise. He regretted much having been absent at the time of our arrival, as he could have prevented the unfortunate occurrence which had taken place, and would now endeavour to do all in his power to obtain our release, but as a preliminary step it would be necessary for us to say every thing they wished.

We were guarded most strictly, having 8 or 10 men constantly with us in a place about 15 feet long by 10 broad and others during the night came round frequently with

torches to see that all was right, while the courtyard was filled with armed soldiers.

On Sunday afternoon the brother of the Prah Klang with 3 or 4 other Rajahs came into our prison to tell us as they said our faults, and that they would write to the Rajah of Penang on the subject.

They then proceeded to read—that we had killed a horse in the King's boat—that we had said we would have killed it before the Prah-Klang—that two of the Lascars had knives when they entered the palace which was contrary to the custom of Siam—that we were indebted to the Prah Klang for not being beaten to death—that we had refused to be searched and that killing the horse were two great faults in Siam, and that if done by a native it would have been death ; but that the Prince out of his great friendship for the Rajahs of Bengal and Penang had forgiven us—that the brig must immediately proceed to Paknam. Here we ventured to make a few remarks in our own defence and as we were very unwell offered to deliver up all our muskets, pistols and swords if they would only allow us to go on board then, promising at the same time if we moved out of the vessel, that they might cut our heads off. But we were stopped and told that the case had already been decided upon by these great men of the Kingdom and no

alteration whatever could possibly take place after their decision. They then said that our Mussulman Malun [mate] could remain and settle our accounts and afterwards join us either at Paknam or outside of the Bar.

It was here insinuated that I had been the first transgressor in striking one of the Chokidhars, but I dared them to the proof, but so confident were they that they waited half an hour at least, but afterwards abandoned it—a most convincing proof that they were the aggressors.

They then returned us the first letter which we had written to the Prince and dictated another No. 2,* from which it will appear that even in their own eyes our faults were not very great, and as they admitted we had conducted ourselves for six months without fault, surely their treatment was most unjustifiable—for what had we done? We brought a horse as a present to the King. He had cost us some money and a great deal of trouble. He was accepted and much liked and taken away without asking our leave—and but a few days before had been in such high favor as to be placed next but one to the King in his annual procession, but it had been thought proper after keeping him for six months to return him, for what reason we are ignorant. We had no accommodation nor provision for

* See letter of
19 Oct. 1822 copied
from S. S. vol. 57.

him. He was again our own property. They had used him ill and insulted us and unjustly thought the first loss the best—accordingly when he came alongside we ordered him to be killed. We also said we would not be searched—but did they ever attempt it? No, they knocked us down first, and searched us afterwards. Good God! surely this was not treatment which any body living for six months in a country without blame or reproach could have expected. If any fault could have been found with us it was an opportunity well calculated for bringing any body into favor, but though I believe all the population of Bangkok came to see us, yet not one had a smile on their countenance nor an ill word to give us. Even the (5) Pia Chulah, (6) Raasday, and (7) Luang Sawat, our great enemies dare not say a word and when they and the Prah-Klang were silent all men must be content to hold their tongues, for there are not four greater villains unhung.

(5). A Mussulman and the King's interpreter. He and a Siamese Pia Siphiphat value the kincabubs and other valuable articles for the Court. He has always shown himself decidedly hostile to the British.

(6). The son of the Pia Chutalah and one of the principal Crannies—the accounts of duties and charges are made up by him and a great part of the cargo wanted for the Court is valued by him.

(7) The son of the Pia Siphipat and coadjutor of Raasday and as a great a villain, but not so much duplicity.

Through the favor of Chou Croom we obtained leave to have one pair of our irons removed which afforded us great relief, but we could not procure the same indulgence for the poor Lascars as it was a special favour granted to us only.

On Tuesday the brig moved down the river, and I take this opportunity of saying that we are much indebted to Captain McDonnell for the assistance he gave of men and boats, and without which it could not have been accomplished so soon.

On Wednesday the 23rd October some of the same great men who had visited us formerly came for the purpose of Captain McDonnell's* to the Prince and fortunately it agreed with the translation in their possession.

*(an omission
apparently
occurs here.)*

Our Mussulman was introduced, but accompanied by the Crannies Raasday and Luang Sawat, and such was the strictness exercised, that though we had the whole of our accounts to settle, it was obliged to be done publicly, nor was any private conversation whatever allowed. We were obliged to leave a large sum of money to be collected by him, and as the Prah Klang, much to our loss and against both his and our inclination, kept him to go in the King's ship, it is doubtful if we shall ever receive the amount left with him.

The irons of the Lascars had already been taken off and they now proceeded to remove ours, when packing up everything we were ready to go, but a message was brought us that the Prah Klang expected a visit and we were obliged to submit.

We then proceeded about 3 o'clock to the Ghaut [landing place,] accompanied by my never to be forgotten friend Chow Cron and his affectionate son Aam, and embarking to my great joy in my own sampan, instead of a King's boat, proceeded down the river, accompanied by a Siamese of rank and the Captain of the Port in their own boats and a linguist with us to Paknam, where the Prah Klang's brother was, and returning on board the brig, enjoyed the luxury of being once more at liberty.

Here it was proposed to us that if we would leave our long boat, she should be sent after us with our guns, after we had crossed the bar, but compliance was quite out of the question, for we could neither spare the boat nor Lascars. We however offered to pay a boat if they would send them out to us. We then asked for a pilot and they promised one till the very last, for on Thursday morning one of the linguists came on board, and taking the other two away said that one of them would return with the pilot, but he never came, and it is evident it was never intended, for the

same linguist told our gunner in Bangkok that we should neither get our guns nor a pilot.

We took the ground in coming out on Friday, 25th October, and remained till Friday the 1st November, when we fortunately floated over the bar, and in the evening made all sail on our voyage.

Two days after joining the brig I was taken dangerously ill and did not recover for some time afterwards.

(Signed) WM. STORM.

(A true copy)

(Signed) T. S. RAFFLES.

Factory Records, FORT CORNWALLIS the 20 February 1823.
Straits Settlements,
vol. 89.

Praklang of Siam.

PRAKLANG of SIAM.

Translation of a letter from the Praklang,
Minister at Siam, to the Honble. the Governor.

This letter from Tan Chao Phraya Phra Klang at the Empire of the great Nakhon Sri Ayuddhya (or Siam) comes to the Honorable William Edward Phillips Governor of Pulo Penang. In the year 1184 of the Horse, the Governor General of Bengal sent Crawford the Chief and Dangerfield the second, and the Doctor the third, and the Officer to the Escort the fourth, with a letter and presents which we respectfully conveyed to the King in order to introduce a mode of advantageous correspondence, and open the channels of commerce so that the English merchants might frequent the Empire of Siam, and those of the latter country the Dependencies of the English, so that their mutual intercourse might be increased. For the last thirty years it never has been customary for an ambassador to be sent from Bengal to the Empire. The Chief of the Marine received the letter and Crawford the Ambassador from Bengal according to the customs observed with regard to Ambassadors

of great countries, who had not been accustomed to come to Siam, but whose having begun to do so was a proof of an inclination for an advantageous intercourse. First the King was graciously pleased to admit Crawford and his Ministers to approach his presence, bowing down according to former customs, and also gave directions to a chief man to prepare a house for the Ambassador Crawford to live in, and entertained him there for a month, so that Crawford and the Ministers presiding over that Department might deliberate on commercial matters, but their discussion was not successful, for the customs of the English did not agree with those of the Empire of Siam, which had been established from formerly. Furthermore Crawford requested that the English might be allowed to have resident merchants at Siam, but the letter which he brought expressly stated that no place to reside in was requested where such merchants might be placed, from which it appears that what Crawford said did not agree with the sentiments of the Governor General which gave no ground for hearing him with confidence. From former times the English were never accustomed to place resident merchants in Siam, but the English knew not the peculiar customs of the country even at the time of Crawford's coming there. Crawford stayed three months and upwards, and had ample time for representing every thing he desired, and he appointed a writer to

take account of the arrivals and departures of prows, intending to observe the place and its population, and he also drew maps of all the rivers, sounding their depth, and measuring the extent of the islands without the river's mouth, which were many in number. When Crawford had departed from the Empire Nai Tongrat and Nai Buntong, who were his interpreters, stayed at the Empire of Siam in the ship, and they acquainted the Chiefs of the Country that Crawford had brought a letter from the Governor General ostensibly to open channels of commerce and advantageous intercourse, but that he and the military officers would not communicate to them, Tongrat and Buntong, the real reasons of their coming, saying moreover that this Crawford was a very clever and investigating man, and had come in order to view the Empire of Siam previous to the English fitting out an expedition with ships of war to come and conquer and seize on the Empire. And it was for this reason that Crawford, Dangerfield, the Doctor and the military officer sounded the rivers and measured the size of the Islands, small and great, and reckoned the population, and took counsel to do many other things to give cause of offence, which were supererogatory to the letter of the Governor General of Bengal thinking to transgress against the customs of the former princes which were that the bearers of letters should do every thing tending to a prolongation of

advantageous intercourse. Furthermore Captain Smith and Storm came to trade in Siam, and presented respectfully a horse which was not acceptable to the King and the Chief Ministers acquainted Captain Storm with this, and that the horse was not handsome and valuable enough, nor indeed like the horses of the Governor General, and moreover that by astrology it was discovered to be an unlucky horse, and for those reasons directed by His Majesty to be returned to the Captain of the ship, who was to take the horse away with him. Captain Storm said it was not agreeable to him to take the horse away, and when he had sold his cloths, and prepared his return cargo and his ship for sea, he demanded the horse, and on the Chief Ministers sending it down to the ship, the Captain would not receive it, but ordered a white man to kill it and throw it into the prow in the presence of the men of rank who had brought it, and he ended with much insolence and sneering with coarse language by no means suitable to the respect due to one sending a present to His Majesty, nor even to a casual compliment paid to a man of rank in case of which being unacceptable, of an inferior description, and being returned as such, it is never customary to be in a passion and destroy the article so as to irritate the Chiefs of the place. But Captain Smith and Storm were so offensive in their disrespect to the King of Siam, that if they had

been treated according to the custom of Siam, they would have been put to death. The Government servants however were much angered and annoyed by Captain Smith and Storm's conduct, and even the very common people of the country were irritated at their having come as merchants to buy and sell and having behaved in so disrespectful and offensive a manner. The Chief Ministers having reported this matter to the King, he commanded Captain Smith and Storm to be seized and examined, on which they came with some of their Kalassies armed, and the Chiefs became suspicious, the more so Captain Smith and Storm having come to the presence under accusation, on which account they proceeded to disarm the Kalassies, and to investigate the matter according to the customary forms, which Captain Smith and Storm would not allow but proceeded to strike and resist them ; on which the Tamruet seized and flogged them according to the custom of the country. Captain Storm was very self ignorant to come with four or five people when the authorities of the place had more than a hundred present, but he was resolved to try a riot and actually pushed and struck the servants of Government, on which an order was given to bind him and that he should be examined and informed that his horse, being an unlucky one, was not found acceptable by His Majesty, and being returned by the Chief Ministers in a proper manner, he

had thought proper to kill it, and be guilty of offensive disrespect which subjected him by the laws of Siam to death. Captain Storm then wrote a letter confessing his fault in humble terms, and requesting that the Chief Ministers would intercede with the King for his pardon, saying that he was a trader who had come from far, and did not know the laws and customs of Siam, on which ground he requested pardon this month. The guns and arms of the ship, which were many in number, were taken on shore and kept lest Captain Smith and Storm should shoot at or attack the people and thus occasion a rupture of the commercial intercourse, but the Chief Officers had orders to give them up, of which the Captain was informed that when he went down the river, and passed the part of the country which was inhabited, he should send a boat to take away his guns and a pilot, but as Captain Storm did not choose to do this, his arms were left behind, and he went away without a pilot by following a Chinese junk through the shallow parts of the river. Captain Smith and Storm were both foolish and malicious doing this, with intent to slander the Siamese to other traders, by charging them with seizing their arms, so that the merchants who knew not the true state of the case might become suspicious of such treatment. The guns and muskets left behind by Captain Storm being 4 in number will be now sent by the

ship of Captain McDonnell, to whom they have been delivered, and he has taken a written account of them, and given it to the Chief Minister.

Furthermore Captain McDonnell accompanied the Ambassador Crawford to Siam but he quarrelled with him, and Crawford left him behind. Captain McDonnell did not accompany him, but landed all his goods and placed them in the warehouse of the Portuguese merchants of Goa, the Governor of which had requested of the King of Siam to allow them to stay at Siam and build ships. Captain McDonnell bought a merchant Portuguese ship from Macao of Pua Kalalut [Carlos] and afterwards he and Pua Carlos had a disagreement and applied for investigation, in the course of which Captain McDonnell said Carlos had cheated him both in silver and cloths and argued litigiously on many points. The Minister who received the Custom Duties might have been witness in the case, but they had secretly traded and bought and sold without giving notice to the proper authorities which was a fault against the laws of Siam, and the case could not therefore be decided but left for McDonnell to go and make complaint to the Governor General of Bengal, on which the Governor General of Bengal might write to that of Goa, desiring this Carlos might be seized and the cause be investigated and decided by the Governor General of Bengal according to the customs of Europeans. This

has been the consequence of Carlos conspiring with merchants to defraud the Collectors of the Revenue which is a high crime. Carlos on the other hand, accused McDonnell of adultery with his wife, to whom he had secretly given hair pins, and he laid an ambush of Kalassies armed with swords and pistols wrapt up with cloth to seize McDonnell and punish him. On this the Minister who investigated it decided that as Carlos had been guilty of a great fault in conspiring to defraud the Revenue, he would give him no redress, but that he might go and represent the matter to the Governor General of Bengal. But Captain McDonnell has also been guilty of several offences, for when Captain Smith and Storm killed the horse, and was apprehended, orders were given to guard and take care of their ship while they were in confinement, in order that she might not be plundered by the Kalassies, and to obviate litigation on that account McDonnell went and reported to four ships that had come to trade, that the Siamese Government intended to seize Captain Smith and Storm's ship. There are a great number of merchants in Siam who come there to trade without intermission, and are all kindly treated and protected by the Government even to the Nakhodas and lowest of the crew of every prow and junk whoever they may be. And even if these commit any fault the goods of the merchants on board the vessels are taken care of so

as to avoid disputes. But McDonnell having committed this slander the crews assembled and hoisted their flags and armed themselves with loaded muskets, and if any man had been killed in consequence McDonnell would assuredly have been seized and put to death according to law.

McDonnell further told the interpreter Phanakngan that the English intended to attack the Empire, and that it was resolved upon, that if the vessels of the King of Siam did not go to trade at the English ports offence would be taken, and they would be seized, but he was told by a Chief of the Empire who enquired into this, that the Governor General of Bengal had sent a letter to desire that the trade might be laid entirely open on both sides, so that English merchants should come to Siam and not be allowed to transgress, but directed to adhere to the old laws agreeably to the custom of great countries. This plan of the Governor General of Bengal had gained him a highly favourable report among the merchants of the Empire for wisdom and prudence, and they said he was the fittest person to hold a high station over the English possessions all over the world, only Crawford having come and made additions to what the Governor General said, and done what was improper, and Captain Smith and Storm and Captain McDonnell having conducted themselves with disrespect, and behaved insolently to the

Government, was not in accordance with the Governor General's sentiments. Now it is considered that what Crawford has done supererogatory to the orders he had received from the Governor General of Bengal, and Captain Smith and Storm's and Captain McDonnell's reporting so in opposition to the sentiments expressed in the letter, the plan of prolonging the friendly intercourse between the Siamese and English has not sufficiently succeeded, nor the business of uniting these large countries by embassies by commercial intercourse, and all on both sides in conformity to the established laws of each country, and the protection and kindness to be afforded and prolonged as long as the sun and moon should last. His Majesty the King of Siam has now directed this letter to be written to the Governor of Penang, to acquaint him with all these things in Duplicate, both Siamese and Malayan, and also another letter to Mr. Prinsep who transacts the business of Government under the Governor General of Bengal to the same purport, which it is solicited may be conveyed to Bengal. The Portuguese Interpreter who has translated this into Malay has done it but imperfectly. Written on the 1st day of the Moon's decrease, 1st month, year 1184 of the Horse.

(A true translation)

(Signed) W. S. CRACROFT

Malay Transr. to Govt.

Factory Records, FORT CORNWALLIS the 20 February 1823.
Straits Settlements,
vol. 89, pp. 408-411.

To the Phraklang of Siam.

I, the Governor of Prince of Wales Island, have received a letter from the Phraklang, apprizing me of the occurrences which have taken place at the Court of Siam during and after Mr. Crawford's Mission from the Most Noble the Governor General of Bengal. I have carefully perused my friend's letter, and fully understand its contents.

The Prah Klang must be aware that Mr. Crawford and the Most Noble the Governor General, by whom he was deputed to Siam, are the best judges of the conduct he pursued at Siam, and how far it was regulated by the instructions which he had received. Mr. Crawford's Mission was for the purpose of encouraging and extending the commerce between the British and Siamese Empire, and if that object is fulfilled in any way it will redound to his credit and to the great advantage of the two countries. I can at all events assure my friend that the British Government are still anxious only to promote the happiness and welfare of the numerous inhabitants placed under its care, and to this end it still looks

forward to the day when the feelings and opinions of the Court of Siam in regard to a free, unrestricted and peaceful commerce will be the same as those which actuate on all occasions the conduct of the British Government.

With regard to Mr. Storm's affair, I must assure my friend that his account fully coincides with that fairly given by that gentleman himself, and which had formerly been submitted to the Most Noble the Governor General. Let me advise my friend however that it would be much better, whenever a British subject commits any transgression against the laws of Siam and not of an atrocious nature, if he would order the person so transgressing to leave the country, and transmit a complaint against him to the Governor General of Bengal.

There is one subject more on which I wish to address my friend. A man named Tongrat attended Mr. Crawford as an interpreter and remained behind at Siam. He is a subject of this Government and has a family residing at this Settlement, and who being very anxious for his return, I request my friend will do me the favour to send him to Prince of Wales Island by the very first opportunity after the receipt of this letter. If my friend does this it will be considered as a proof of his disposition to be on the same amicable terms with

this Government as it will be and has been on all occasions the policy and happiness of this Government to preserve towards Siam.

(Signed) W. E. PHILLIPS

Governor.

Factory Records,
Straits Settlements,
vol. 89, pp. 117-118
(2d set of paging).

FORT CORNWALLIS the 3 April 1823.

To W. S. CRACROFT Esquire.

Mr. Secy, Swinton,
Fort William,
7 Feb. 1823.

Acting Secretary to the Government
of Prince of Wales Island.

Sir,

* *Should be 5 Dec.*
1822. See copy
from Bengal Pol.
Cons. Range 122
vol. 29.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your dispatch of the 5 ultimo,* enclosing a copy of the complaint submitted by Mr. Storm, the Supra Cargo of the Brig Phoenix, of the ill treatment he and Captain Smith had experienced from the Siamese Government.

* *See letter of 29*
Jan 1823, ante.

2. The representation by Mr. Storm having been communicated to Mr. Crawford, late agent to the Governor General on a Mission to the Eastward, for the purpose of his stating any information or observations he might wish to offer on the subject, I am directed to transmit to you the enclosed copy of Mr. Crawford's reply,* and to intimate to you, for the information of the Honorable the Governor in Council, that the Honorable the Governor General in Council is of opinion, that under all the circumstances of the case, the British Government would not be warranted in making the ill usage sustained by Mr. Storm

and Captain Smith a subject of remonstrance
with the Government of Siam.

I have &c.

(Signed) G. SWINTON.

Secry. to the Govt.

Fort William

7 February 1823

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 123, vol. 29.

FORT WILLIAM 7th February 1823.

No. 10.

To J. CRAWFURD Esqre.

&ca. &ca. &ca.

Sir,

* See ante.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo* and to desire that you will state the circumstances of the abduction from the port of Calcutta of the slaves alluded to in the 4th paragraph as far as may be consistent with your own knowledge. You are also desired to endeavour to obtain further particulars from the persons who it is believed can depose to the manner in which the Slaves were kidnapped.

I have &ca.

(Signed) GEO. SWINTON

Secy. to Govt.

Council Chamber

7th February 1823.

Bengal Political
Consultations,
Range 128, vol. 31.

FORT WILLIAM 28th February 1823.

Poll. Dept.

No. 23.

Mr. CRAWFURD—

Service

To G. SWINTON Esqr.

Secretary to the Government.

Poll. Dept.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, directing my attention to the circumstances attending the abduction from our possessions of certain slaves by a ship belonging to the King of Siam. The facts connected with these slaves which I can state upon my own personal knowledge are very few. Two out of the number were brought to the house of the Prah Klang shortly after the arrival of the Siamese ship, and these individuals were almost daily seen by us from this period down to that of our own departure. They appeared to be lads of twelve or fourteen years of age and African negroes. I spoke to them hoping to get some part of their history from themselves, but they did not seem to understand any Indian language, a fact that certainly showed that they had not lived long in our possessions. When the Commander

and Pilot of the Siamese ship waited upon me after their return from Bengal, I charged them with what they had done and reminded them that the abduction of slaves was considered amongst us a capital offence. They rather evaded than denied what they had done. I have reason to believe that the Commander had a commission to bring a certain number of negro slaves, and that he was not unaware that in taking them he had committed an offence against our laws.

The most circumstantial information which I have been able to obtain respecting the slaves in question has been derived from personal communication both before and since I had the honor to receive your letter, with John da Silva, a native Portuguese, who went to Siam as a Sea-Cunny or Quarter Master in the King of Siam's ship and returned in the Mission ship in the same capacity. This person states that the slaves taken from British ports were five in number, three of whom were purchased at Calcutta, and two at Prince of Wales Island. They were all lads and African negroes, four of them were from 12 to 14 years of age, but one had attained the age of sixteen and he alone spoke the Hindustani language. Upon their arrival in Siam, two of them were sent to the house of the Prah-Klang and three to the Palace for the King. Of the individuals from whom the slaves were bought my infor-

mant has not been able to afford me any information.

I beg respectfully to state that on this and other points connected with the abduction of the slaves, it is probable that more particulars than I have been able to submit may be obtained upon the return to Calcutta of the Lascars that navigated the Siamese ship to Siam, which carried off the slaves. A number of these people are daily expected in the English brig Phoenix and the Portuguese brig Santa Anna.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. CRAWFURD.

Calcutta

26th Feby. 1823.

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N.C.

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